

# Epicurean Friends Newsletter - March 2019

Post by "Cassius" of February 25, 2019 at 3:41 PM



March, 2019

**"Not just a philosophy, but a way of life!"**

\*\* Welcome to this month's edition of the best email newsletter for Epicureans around the world. If you know of other newsletters, or Epicurean news that we aren't covering, please send us an email!

\*\* Our home base for discussion, where you can find links to major Epicurean news and websites across the internet is <https://www.epicureanfriends.com/>. Our goal is to better understand and apply the wisdom of Epicurus, and in the words of Lucian, "*strike a blow for Epicurus - that great man whose holiness and divinity of nature were not shams, who alone had and imparted true insight into the good, and who brought deliverance to all that consorted with him!*" For more background, [check here](#) and also [here](#). For those who use Facebook, we also cover news from the [Epicurean Philosophy Facebook page](#). For interim updates between editions of this newsletter, check out [EpicurusToday.com](#) for daily updates.

\*\* We are frequently asked for help in connecting with a local Epicurean group. At present there are only a few established groups in the world, notably in Greece and Australia. If you are interested in connecting with Epicureans in your local area, please [check this Regional Epicurean Group Forum](#) for help in organizing and finding local connections. The forum is divided into sections for each area of the world, and also contains hints for using Meetup.com as a method of getting started.

\*\* Let's also review how to find links to active Epicurean websites. In addition to the links at EpicurusToday.com, an updated list is maintained [here at EpicureanFriends](#). If you are someone who is studying Epicurus and trying to apply his lessons in your life, you're well aware of the emphasis on friendship and on communicating with like-minded people. Wherever you are, even if there is no local group yet, please stop in at one of the on-line websites and introduce yourself. The best way you can help yourself and the Epicurean websites is to ask

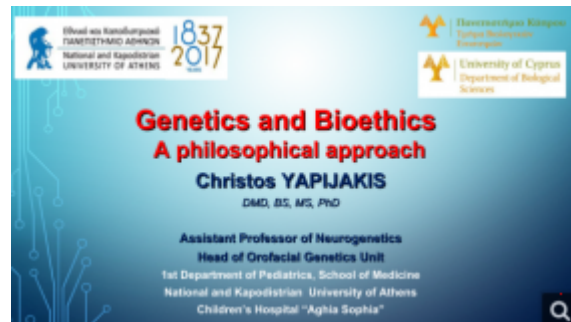
questions, comment, criticize, praise, and otherwise give us your feedback so we can get to know you better. At EpicureanFriends you are welcome to subscribe anonymously, and as long as you follow the rules of the group your postings are welcome. Reading a book or even a website is no substitute for personal interactions with other Epicureans. If you meet someone who isn't friendly and interested in talking about Epicurus, then you aren't talking to an Epicurean!

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE RECENT TOPICS OVER THE PAST MONTH THAT YOU MAY WISH TO CHECK:**

\*\* It is well known that Frederick the Great, one of the most famous kings of Prussia, was a fan of Lucretius (and therefore of Epicurus). With the help of German-speaking members at EF, we tracked the source of a very interesting Frederick quote: ***"Christianity is an old metaphysical fiction, stuffed with fables, contradictions, and absurdities: It was spawned in the fevered imaginations of the Orientals, and then spread to our Europe, where some fanatics espoused it, where some intriguers pretended to be convinced by it, and where some imbeciles actually believe it."*** Anti-Christian statements are a dime a dozen, and disbelieving Christianity or simply being an atheist is no guarantee whatsoever that a person has an affinity for Epicurus. When we see the connection that someone both rejects conventional religion and praises Epicurus, however, we're dealing with something special that students of Epicurus should know about. If you know of other historical figures who modern Epicureans should know about, please be sure to let us know. The full thread documenting the background of the statement by Frederick the Great is [here](#).

\*\* The local Epicurean Garden in Athens Greece is one of the most active groups in the world. They conduct very elaborate yearly seminars at least once a year, and their leading members regularly produce articles. Unfortunately for those who are not bilingual, many of them are only in Greek, but we recently received news that (A) the Athens group will be working in collaboration with the Greek branch of UNESCO, and under the auspices of the Mayor of Athens and of the Mayor of Pallini, to organize the 1st Panhellenic Meeting of Happiness "Happiness is a Human Right" in order to discuss philosophically and scientifically about happiness and present the Declaration of the right of happiness in the European Union. On the 20th of March (International Day of Happiness) the Group will announce the details of the 1st Panhellenic Meeting of Happiness which will take place on April 14. The English language page of the website of the Athens Garden, where more information will be announced [is here](#). As an example of some of the work from the Athens Garden, check out this [slide presentation on Bioethics here](#).

\*\* One of our active posters at EpicureanFriends, DVO, started a thread on "[Best Ways To Introduce Teachings.](#)" DVO has a special interest in Utilitarianism and how those ideas may relate to Epicurean philosophy, and the thread contains lots of interesting discussion about where to start and how Epicurus relates and differs from the Utilitarians.



\*\* The subject of Epicurus' views on the Greek Gods of his time, and on the existence of gods in general, is always a contentious subject. One variation on that topic being discussed now is "[Imagery of Gods / Gods Among Men](#)" focused mainly on how modern Epicureans should consider and use images of divinity in Epicurean philosophy. Even if you reject the view that true atomic-based entities exist somewhere in space, it's clear that talk of god-like beings was a subject regularly discussed in Epicurean philosophy, if for no other reason than as a symbol of the best possible life. This thread may help advance your own thoughts about that aspect.

\*\* Two commentators whose views of Epicurus are regularly discussed are Bertrand Russell and Martha Nussbaum. Both are frequently cited, yet neither were explicitly Epicurean themselves, and their views of Epicurus should not be accepted uncritically. Threads were started recently on both to collect citations illustrating their personal views, so that those can be kept in mind when evaluating their opinions of Epicurean philosophy. The thread on [Bertrand Russell is here](#) and on [Martha Nussbaum is here](#).

\*\* One of our most popular sections at EpicureanFriends is the forum [Epicurean-Friendly Art and Music](#). The forum is divided into sections according to genres of music. We already have a good collection of links to YouTube versions of Epicurean-friendly music, and we will always be looking for more. Please drop by and add your own suggestions for others to appreciate.

\*\* Over the last month we have been adding new graphics/memes on the Forty [Principal Doctrines](#), with the goal of preparing one or more for each of the forty. Check out the ones we have prepared so far [at this link](#) or go [directly to the EF gallery section here](#).

\*\* One of the graphics/memes you most definitely don't want to miss is [Nate's "Allegory of the Oasis"](#) which has been revised and updated in recent months. The characters and events illustrated in this graphic are a great way to think about and discuss key points of Epicurean philosophy. We want to continue to thank Nate for his work in preparing this.

\*\* As we begin to close this month's newsletter, let me call to your attention the main ways of navigating the EpicureanFriends website. If you are new to the site, be sure to first check out the material on the [home page](#). Once you are familiar with that, you'll probably want to bookmark the [Dashboard](#) to go straight to new forum posts on future return visits. We have recently added a new link - the [New!](#) button that appears at the start of the top menu. Click

that New! button and you'll go directly to the latest updates in all sections of the website. If you have catching up to do and would like to see the topics that have been most active beginning of the forum, [click here](#).

\*\* In addition to the other [links mentioned above](#), if you are an active Facebook user, please check out the [Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group](#). You will probably also want to follow the [Epicurus Page on Facebook](#) as well as the various pages of the [Society of Friends of Epicurus](#).

\*\* Thanks to all who have participated at EpicureanFriends.com over the past month. It can't be emphasized enough that proper application of Epicurean philosophy demands that we have Epicurean friends, so we urge you to join one of the many Epicurean venues and study Epicurus with like-minded people - and then you too will be well on your way to becoming *a god among men!*

As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please let us know at [the forum](#).

Live Well!

Cassius Amicus

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Note: If you received this newsletter as a forward from someone else, please join us at <https://www.epicureanfriends.com> and register for an account, where you will receive your own copy of the newsletter each month. If at any point you would like to unsubscribe, please [go to your account here and deselect the "Newsletter" user group](#). If you have any difficulties doing that, please notify the [admin](#) and we will assist you promptly.

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## **Post by "Cassius" of February 25, 2019 at 5:32 PM**

Oscar you are full of good ideas!

- Yes the goal of sending on the Twentieth is a great idea!

- Yes the discussion of the Frederick quote is also a great idea. I think one of the major attractions here is that we can have extended and in-depth discussions of hard-to-find points like that, so that is an excellent example of something to include!

## Post by "Cassius" of February 25, 2019 at 5:51 PM

I am still hanging a little at FB, but boy you and I do think alike on the general strategy!!

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## Post by "Cassius" of July 3, 2022 at 6:49 PM

For Archive Purposes, some old editions of the newsletter:

Post by CassiusAmicus on Fri Jun 07, 2013 9:14 am

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 06/08/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the first of what is intended to be a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. Check the second item below for how you can receive a copy of this by email every week.

\*\*In late-breaking news, it's very sad to hear that Jaakko Wallenius, long-time admin of the Epicurus facebook page (and many others as well) has announced that his battle with cancer is entering what may be its final stages. Jaakko has been a real treasure for many many people who have come across his postings over the years, and if you're one of them you might want to check in on him with some appropriate greetings. Check Jaakko's recent post on the Epicurus page at <https://www.facebook.com/epicureanphilosopher?fref=ts> for a link to his post about this, and link where you can find his works collected on Scribd. The post begins "I am just now approaching the last hours of my physical life. Cancer has finally taken over my body and there is nothing to be done about it. However, as the creator and long-time admin of this group I would finally like use my option to push also my own material here. A tremendous collection of my main life work is on offer in Scribd-service ...."

\*\*This past week saw the launch of Epicurean Philosophy Today, a new forum for the discussion and advancement of Epicureanism. Please check out the forum, which is based in England, at <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/> Registration is free and easy and there are many threads of interest. Be sure to set your preferences for notifications, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. Latest topics at the "Epicurean Philosophy Today Forum are:

-- Epicurus The Overman <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t18-epicurus-the-overman>

-- That Old Time Secularism <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t5-that-old-time-secularism>

\*\*Another new blog with an emphasis on Epicurus started this week in the US. "Turtles All The Way Down" at <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/> is hosted by Flavius Saxo. Flavius has

made several interesting posts already, such as "On Philosophy And Terror Management Theory" and "On Tornados and the Problem of Evil."

\*\*Over at The International Society of Friends of Epicurus, <http://societyofepicurus.com/>, your host Hiram has reviewed Peter Saint-Andre's latest production "Letters on Happiness: An Epicurean Dialogue" <https://stpeter.im/writings/epicurus/> which is also available on Amazon <http://www.amazon.com/Letters-Happin.../dp/0615825214/> You may also want to check out Hiram's Meetup Group for the Chicago area, <http://www.meetup.com/Chicago-Societ...ds-of-Epicurus/>, for a model you might want to follow yourself. Another meetup model worthy of emulation is the one in Sydney, Australia: <http://www.meetup.com/Sydney-Epicurus-Philosophy-Garden/>

\*\*Another fan of Epicurus who has been busy lately is Peter St. Andre. Peter's journal can be found here <https://stpeter.im/journal/> and in it he announces that he has recently completed his ebook "The Tao of Roark" as well as his "Letters on Happiness - An Epicurean Dialog" <https://stpeter.im/writings/epicurus/> Peter's Twitter feed is <https://twitter.com/stpeter>

\*\*In case you missed the post at NewEpicurean.com last week, you might be interested in the information about Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens," which despite its generic title is a full-throated explanation and defense of Epicureanism. Thomas Jefferson called it a "treat of the highest order" and I bet you'll like it too. Check here for the background and links: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=5690>

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Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jun 15, 2013 7:01 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 06/15/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the second of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. Check the second item below for how you can receive a copy of this by email every week. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*In news that was expected but still very sad, Jaakko Wallenius, long-time admin of the Epicurus facebook page, lost his battle with cancer. Jaakko's last posts on the Epicurus page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/epicureanphilosopher?fref=ts> An excellent obituary of Jaakko can be found here: <http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3...tml&h=3AQFIY7aw>

\*\* No new forums to announce this week, but I do want to make you aware that we may not be too far away from the glorious day when every Epicurean household can equip itself with a good-quality copy of an ancient bust of our favorite philosopher! It appears that 3D printer technology is about to make that happen, and Ed L. of the facebook group is working with the leading free software page <http://www.123dapp.com> to move us closer to that much-to-be-desired goal. I am providing photos of the bust that I have, and Ed seems to be technologically sharp enough to carry us to the next phase of producing a 3d model that can be stored on the 123dapp.com site for anyone to order the own copy from the various suppliers who will do the work for those who don't have their own printer. No word on costs yet, but I will keep you up to date with news on that. At present it does not appear that we will soon have access to the full seated statue version, but the bust is a copy of the version discovered at Herculaneum, so of the two the bust is probably the more desirable to have. If I recall correctly the site can also generate holograms, which might also be of interest. Cicero with his cups and rings will be quite outclassed by what the moderns are going to be able to do!

\*\*Over at Turtles All The Way Down <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/> Flavius Saxo has noted the existence of an article by Santayan on Lucretius which can be found on Peter St. Pierre's website at <http://www.monadnock.net/santayana/lucretius.html> Flavius also started several interesting threads on the main Garden of Epicurus facebook page.

\*\*Over at The International Society of Friends of Epicurus, <http://societyofepicurus.com/>, your host Hiram has posted a page of shareable Epicurean memes <http://societyofepicurus.com/shareable-epicurean-memes/> including one suitable for your own alteration. Hiram also scored a coup by having his site listed on AC Grayling's list of links, which is a great compliment to Hiram's work <http://www.acgrayling.com/links>

\*\*Not much new on my own site at <http://www.NewEpicurean.com>, but I do want to mention that I have come across an excellent new-to-me book by Dr. Diskin Clay, "Paradosis and Survival: Three Chapters in the History of Epicurean Philosophy" [http://www.press.umich.edu/23166/paradosis\\_and\\_survival](http://www.press.umich.edu/23166/paradosis_and_survival) Note that if you click on this link and check to the left of the page, you can find a fairly extensive preview of the book at the Hadithi

Trust link. If anyone is a participant at a member institution and has access to the full book I would gratefully appreciate them contacting me. It looks to have a lot of great information, including the reason I was looking for it: it contains Dr. Clay's list of the Fundamental Physical Principles on which Epicureanism is based. According to the title of a scroll by Epicurus on the subject, these were apparently twelve in number. Norman DeWitt has a list he reconstructed in his chapter on The New Physics in "Epicurus and His Philosophy." The lists produced by DeWitt and Clay are very similar, but not identical, so this is subject that deserves further study.

\*\*If I miss anything significant, please be sure to let me know by private message on facebook or [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

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Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jun 22, 2013 8:01 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 06/22/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the third a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. Check the second item below for how you can receive a copy of this by email every week. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*This week saw the addition to the "Files" section of the Garden of Epicurus a new essay by Greek Epicurean George Kaplanis entitled "The Crisis and Epicurean Logic. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...72694182819638/> Elli has gone to much work to

make this available to us in English, as it was composed in Greek and presented at a recent Epicurean gathering in Greece. The essay is devoted to analyzing the current economic crisis that plagues Greece (and indeed a much wider area) in a manner consistent with Epicurean analysis procedures. I read the essay with great enjoyment and posted my comments (along with those of others) at the thread for the file. Thanks to George and to Elli for making that available to us!

\*\*We have not previously mentioned the Facebook page which Surazeus Simon Seamount has started for the upcoming release of his poem the Hermead of Surazeus, which he describes as an epic about philosophers and scientists. Epicurus factors large in the poem, and Surazeus has devoted a monumental amount of work to this project, which is well worth your inspection. Portions are already available here: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/128244508/...bout-Scientists> Find more information at [https://www.facebook.com/Hermead?notif\\_t=fbpage\\_fan\\_invite](https://www.facebook.com/Hermead?notif_t=fbpage_fan_invite)

\*\* Over at Turtles All The Way Down <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/> Flavius SaxoFlavius Flaxo has an interesting new post on his experiences at a Buddhist funeral: <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/2013/06/22/a-b...riends-funeral/>

\*\* Nothing new to announce on the 3d printer project of the bust of Epicurus. I have begun to work myself with the software at <http://www.123dapp.com> and found it to be far from easy to "stitch" photos together. Be patient, for this goal will be reached!

\*\*Over at The International Society of Friends of Epicurus, <http://societyofepicurus.com/>, your host Hiram has posted twice on a project that we are working on entitled the Society of Epicurus School <http://societyofepicurus.com/the-society-of-epicurus-school/> What he is referring to there is a new document on which I continue to work entitled Elemental Epicureanism, a draft of which is posted here: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=5733> This work is intended to result in a "restatement" of general principles of Epicurean doctrine, in elementary textbook form, such as an ancient Epicurean might relate if transported to the present day. All raw material for this restatement is taken directly from the biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius, from Lucretius' De Rerum Natura, and from Cicero's On Ends. It requires much more editorial revision before it will be ready for general use, but the draft is available for anyone who is interested.

\*\*This past week was of course the Twentieth of June, and over at my own site at <http://www.NewEpicurean.com>, in addition to the "Elemental Epicureanism post, I posted my monthly essay, this time entitled "May you have smooth and agreeable motions today! <http://newepicurean.com/?p=5767> .

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by private message on facebook or [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

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Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jun 29, 2013 6:37 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 06/29/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fourth a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*This week has seen a number of interesting discussion posts at the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/> including one on "Philosophy and Terror Management Theory," one on the Epicurean attitude toward death, one on the Epicurean position that injustice is not an evil in itself, one on the possible biological basis of anticipations, and one on the role of "mysteries" in ancient Epicureanism. Also there were a number of good links to articles such as the importance of saving the study of the humanities. SHB (Mequa) also posted a couple of creative additions including <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t22-epicurean-...es-of-stupidity>

\*\* Nothing new to announce in regard to new epicurean websites, but this week saw a much-updated version of <http://www.ElementalEpicureanism.com> containing a presentation of Epicureanism from the hypothetical point of view of an ancient Epicurean transported to today.

\*\* Perhaps the most significant link to point out this week is to the post entitled "New Project: Returning th Eternal Light of Epicureanism to England!" Note that ancient Epicureans were known for their appreciation for humor, so take that post in the quasi-serious quasi-light way it was intended. The point of it is that Mequa is investing a lot of time and effort into setting up the framework of a "real forum" for Epicureans to post to, where their discussions will not disappear into the ether of Facebook scrolling, to be remembered for any longer than a day or two only by the computers of the world spy agencies. Mequa is based in England and would

welcome your suggestions on how to make the forum more attractive, easier to use, or whatever appeals to you. He is very talented and capable in his internet skills, and he would genuinely like your feedback on what he has done so far, and what you would like to see to make his effort more helpful and interesting to you. Please leave him a comment here or on one of the Facebook posts with any thought you would like to add for the future direction of the forum.

\*\* Nothing new to announce this week on the 3d printer project of the bust of Epicurus, but I am going to keep listing it here til someone like me gets off the dime and gets the project completed. All that's needed is a bust of Epicurus, a digital camera, and <http://www.123dapp.com> . Oh, and time, which I have not yet found to finish the project.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or at [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

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Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jul 06, 2013 7:45 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 07/06/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* As mentioned last week, be sure to let us know about your thoughts for what you would like to see from an Epicurean social network or forum software. There are many options available to us, so if you have specific ideas, suggestions, or examples you would like to see us implement, please let us know by commenting below!

\*\*First off in the news, "our man in England" has made arrangements to meet with the Cotswold Humanist Society to make a presentation to them about launching a specifically Epicurean initiative. If you have suggestions on a format you would like to see proposed to the Cotswold Humanist Society, such as book discussion, discussion of a particular topic, or whatever, please be sure to let us know, and keep in touch with this initiative by monitoring the Epicurean Philosophy Today Forum at <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/> Here's a link to the Cotswold Humanist Society:

### [Facebook](#)

\*\*The other news is a little thin this week, so let's look at mentions of Epicurus in the general news. Surprisingly given the source, Epicurus rated fairly significant mention in an article at Al Jazeera, "The Search For Another Earth," where Epicurus was credited as being the ancient leader for the idea that other inhabited worlds exist in the universe: "The idea that there might be another Earth somewhere in the Universe was first suggested by the Greek philosopher Epicurus in the third century B.C. At the time, philosophically speaking, the Universe was a bounded one in which the heavenly bodies - the Sun, the Moon, and the five planets visible to the naked eye - orbited in their own respective spheres. The outermost sphere was that of the fixed stars, which were also unmoving and unchanging. It was a cosmos that mimicked the perfection and simplicity of the divine mind, the view that had been propagated by Plato and picked up by Aristotle a century earlier. Epicurus broke with this then-dominant idea by suggesting the opposite: the Universe wasn't bounded and unchanging, it was infinite and filled with infinite other worlds. Some, he said, would be like our own while others would be entirely different. But all planets would share certain features, like a sky over the land and living creatures on its surface. Epicurus' was an unorthodox view that never gained much traction; the Aristotelean cosmos dominated throughout the middle ages. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinio...2024707818.html>

\*\*In the "bang your head against the wall in frustration" department, there's a typical Christian misinterpretation that "life is meaningless" to Epicureans here: "Staring At Death": "Epicureans had psychological advantages and disadvantages. Their good news: We humans, despite the lessons of history, could believe in our own magnificence. We rule, and God doesn't. Their bad news: When we're dead, we're dead. Life is essentially meaningless. We have no "big story." " [http://www.worldmag.com/2013/06/staring\\_at\\_death](http://www.worldmag.com/2013/06/staring_at_death)

\*\* And in the same department, from something called the "Patriotic Vanguard": "Now, where is the mistake of Neo-Epicureanism? Well, it is a fact that the human being can never avoid pain and he must conform and accept it with more or less resignation, or he doesn't sometimes conform in any way and he refuses it absolutely. Furthermore, if the human being decides to

avoid pain at any price because it is an evil and seeks pleasure above all because it is good, he is moving away from God, he rejects the faith in Jesus Christ and his terribly bloody redemption on the cross and he loses the ability to make sense of this pain or suffering as a way to serenity and salvation, joining it with Christ's sacrifice." Epicurean atheism was faith-based, for we have no way to know that God does not exist.  
<http://www.thepatrioticvanguard.com/spip.php?article7194>

\*\* In the world of Epicurean websites, here's a post from Society of Epicurus for the Fourth of July on Jefferson's Epicureanism: <http://societyofepicurus.com/jeffersonian-epicureanism-2/> I haven't come across too many other new blog entries, but I do want to mention a major update in format at my main website. <http://www.NewEpicurean.com>. I hope you like the new format, especially as it works on mobile devices.

\*\* Due to a question from a reader I have produced a suggested reading list for the books featured on the NewEpicurean.com website. The list provides a brief description of each ebook and is organized in a suggested sequence for reading. The list is found here [http://newepicurean.com/?page\\_id=2514](http://newepicurean.com/?page_id=2514)

\*\* Nothing new to announce this week on the 3d printer project of the bust of Epicurus, but I am going to keep listing it here til someone like me gets off the dime and gets the project completed. All that's needed is a bust of Epicurus, a digital camera, and <http://www.123dapp.com> . Oh, and time, which I have not yet found to finish the project.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jul 13, 2013 10:54 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 07/13/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the sixth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*First off in the news, we need to take a poll: Does Elli of the Gardon of Epicurus in Thessalonika remind us mostly of Leontium, Plotina, or some other Epicurean goddess? (I hope Elli doesn't mind the levity.) She has posted this week a series of very inspirational pictures from recent gatherings of Epicurean enthusiasts in Greece, topped off on Saturday by the best of the bunch, a video presentation with **\*\*English Subtitles\*\*** of her presentation of a lecture entitled "The Epicurean Self-Sufficiency In Greece's Current Crisis! It's a short talk of only nine minutes or so, but well worth watching. It's really gracious of Elli to take the time to post that for us, as it was no doubt quite a bit of work to add the English subtitles. The work that she and the other leaders of the Epicurean groups in Greece are doing should be an inspiration to all fans of Epicurus throughout the world. They are really providing a model to emulate, and since I am not a stoic and do not repress my emotions I will admit to being green with envy. Discussion is ongoing on the Garden of Epicurus facebook page, and the video itself can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iH3Dm7x6Qec&list=FLUxcKQs2WNwm8DgZ5WWA4tw>

This week's interesting discussions included a thread (Thursday) about the possibility of an Epicurean underground in the middle ages. The thread makes reference to William of Ockham, Lorenzo Valla, Giordano Bruno, and Pelagius. All are good to list on any table of people who to one degree or another transmitted Epicurean ideas.

Also Thursday was a thread about an article on Darwin as an Epicurean, that served as a followup to a monumental post from July 9 about "Fighting Epicureanism," a christian article that prompted much discussion about Christian misrepresentation of Epicureanism.

Prior to that was a thread about why professional atheists seem to turn a blind eye toward Epicureanism, despite what one would think would be its attractiveness to them. Several other good threads too, but those are probably the highlights.

At my NewEpicurean.com site, I'd like to call attention to a new page I added regarding research projects. [http://newepicurean.com/?page\\_id=6113](http://newepicurean.com/?page_id=6113) In particular, I have called attention to a document that one of our regulars on the Epicurus Facebook page is looking for to assist his translation work on Lucretius. [http://newepicurean.com/?page\\_id=6119](http://newepicurean.com/?page_id=6119)

\*\*As mentioned last week, be sure to let us know about your thoughts for what you would like to see from an Epicurean social network or forum software. There are many options available to us, so if you have specific ideas, suggestions, or examples you would like to see us implement, please let us know by commenting below!

\*\* Nothing new to announce this week on the 3d printer project of the bust of Epicurus, but I am going to keep listing it here til someone like me gets off the dime and gets the project completed. All that's needed is a bust of Epicurus, a digital camera, and <http://www.123dapp.com> . Oh, and time, which I have not yet found to finish the project.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jul 20, 2013 7:05 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 07/20/2013\*\*\*

\*\* Happy Twentieth!!\*\*

\*\*This is the seventh of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*Another great video this week was added to the Facebook page by our friends in Greece/Hellas. The video is here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8Vpe0CZQU8&list=FLUxcKQs2WNwm8DgZ5WWA4tw&index=1> and is entitled "Epicurean Self-Sufficiency Within the Events of Promethia 2013" It is only six and a half minutes long but very well done, with English subtitles. Comments on the video have been uniformly positive and it is well worth watching.

\*\*Another significant thread this week involved Hiram Crespo's posting of a threat at the Beliefnet web site to discuss Epicurean Physics: <http://www.community.beliefnet.com/go/thread/view... Physicist?pg=1> There have been several interesting points and it may lead to some productive discussion.

\*\*Several other good threads concerned a Psychology Experiment and video entitled "Money on the Mind", (well received) and a video on "Epicurus on happiness and death" by a Dr. Dale Tuggy which was widely panned, being rated with BOTH "a picard facepalm and a vader facepalm." 😊 Of course even the misinformed videos can be helpful to know about!

\*\* Progress this week on the 3d printer project! Check the youtube link below for a scan I have prepared using Autodesk's 123d app. I think this is getting \*close\* to usable, but I have not yet figured out how to turn this project into a 3d print. We appear close to the goal of setting up the 3d file on the Autodesk page as a public prototype, and then anyone who wants one can order a printed sculpture (or hologram) directly from that site. This is probably the point where we can make some faster progress if more technically proficient people than me get involved. See if you can't access the 3d model at this link: <http://www.123dapp.com/FullPreview/Index.cfm/ID/1587333> It should allow you to download it and refine it yourself. As currently scanned, the back of the model and a small spot on the back right side, appear to have come out with oval gaps. It would be best to "heal" those areas so they are solid. Of course the model itself should probably be hollow to allow for cheapest reprinting, and then the inside can be filled with sand or modelling clay or something and the bottom sealed. On the other hand the rest of the model -- the main part of it -- looks pretty good! Let me know your comments and suggestions and feel free to take off on your own. I have placed an order for a prototype 4.8 inch tall model, and I will report on how it turns out as soon as I receive it. \*\*" <http://www.youtube.com/embed/tTHPPNP5ABo?rel=0>

\*\*Also this week on the NewEpicurean.com website, I released a text from the letter to Herodotus prepared from the Bailey edition that essentially unwinds the syntax. The version I have prepared for audio use is not suited for the advanced researcher, who will always want to consult one of the literal translations or the original Greek. <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6143>

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by Mequa on Sun Jul 21, 2013 10:19 am

This time of year is known affectionately in England as silly season. In the States, slow news season.

Good work Cassius for finding enough Epicurean news for a regular weekly update, this time of year makes it all the more challenging for all kinds of news reporting!

Mequa

Posts: 33

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jul 27, 2013 8:09 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 07/27/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the eighth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*Yet ANOTHER great video this week from Greece/Hellas. This one is entitled "Self-sufficiency as a product of prudence" by Christos Yapijakis.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1eqIMU092FU&list=FLUxcKQs2WNwm8DgZ5WWA4tw> I have to quote one of my favorite lines from the video:

(1) "In my opinion, one may not possess self-sufficiency if one has not fully understood and embraced Epicurean philosophy, even if one declares oneself friend of Epicurus, even if one attends meetings of "Gardens" just for pastime purposes but has not studied carefully Epicurean texts and continues to have empty beliefs from previous experiences. I think that the only way for someone to assist oneself in Greece of contemporary crisis, and also to assist others to stand on their own feet by illuminating them, is by fully embracing Epicurean philosophy that liberates the mind and leads to conscious self-sufficiency."

(2) "Anyone who asks "and when we are happy, what next?" has not comprehended Epicurean philosophy. Understanding the Epicurean Canon presupposes the inference of concrete conclusions after observation with human senses or the senses of scientific instruments. Anyone who strongly believes in unsubstantiated theories religious, political, athletic or any other kind has not perceived the scientific basis of Epicurean philosophy and is not able to really reach prudence and mental balance. "

\*\*The news of the week that may turn out to be most significant of all is that our leader of the Facebook pages, our Finnish friend Ilkka, has launched his own blog! His first effort was "Is Epicureanism Religion Based?" and can be found here. <http://menoceus.blogspot.fi/2013/07/is-epi...gion-based.html> And his most recent post is here: "Why Do We Need To Practice Philosophy?" <http://menoceus.blogspot.fi/2013/07/why-do...philosophy.html> I don't mean this to sound patronizing but I have found Ilkka's commentary some of the most helpful to me personally over the last couple of years, so I am very pleased to see him launch a blog and hope he'll write frequently.

\*\*And a second new blog this week, this one from your forum's host, is a personal blog not devoted specifically to Epicureanism. Mequa tells me that his posts are unlikely to be related in all cases to Epicureanism, but today's certainly is, and it is on Epicurus' canon of truth, and it's certainly well worth reading. Find the blog "Mequa - Independent Thoughts" here: <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/07/27/phi...st-kept-secret/>

\*\* More Progress this week on the 3d printer project! - But also disappointment..... Last week I reported that my first prototype model was posted here: <http://www.123dapp.com/FullPreview/Index.cfm/ID/1587333> This link is still working, and the more technically proficient among you can use it to work yourself with the 3d mesh I have created. Youtube video of that mesh remains here: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/tTHPPNP5ABo?rel=0> I have now transferred the data file over to SHAPEWAYS, a 3d printing provider, and the model is accessible here: <https://www.shapeways.com/model/1221221/...oductBox-search> Unfortunately, printing efforts to date have been unsuccessful, apparently because I have not properly "hollowed out" the model, and there may be "artifacts" along the baseline that are a problem. Rest assured I will keep working, but also realize that the model files are now online, and anyone can work with them to refine them, even if you don't have your own ceramic bust to photograph. Will keep

working and WILL report back!

\*\*Your host of this forum also posted several interesting threads, one on the response to Islam, and the other on how the web can encourage Narcissism. Also a good reference to an Epicurean text by Eduard Zeller. I'll credit the author as soon as I figure out how to type Greek characters into an ASCII news report!

\*\*Several other good threads were posted this week on the Facebook page from Tom Merle on the theme of modern psychology validating Epicurean ideas. Find them here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\* In my own blog this week, not much new, but I do have a revised and updated version of the Letter to Herodotus. I have found my time writing and preparing this to be very productive, especially to hammer home to me how closely Lucretius followed Epicurus' pattern as laid out in the letter, in writing his own monumental poem. If you ever have the time to check out the "modernized" version I prepared, be sure to look up the most updated release, which is here: [http://newepicurean.com/?page\\_id=6139](http://newepicurean.com/?page_id=6139)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Aug 03, 2013 11:36 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 08/02/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the ninth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and

easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*Mequa posted on his blog this week: <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/08/02/a-n...-of-revolution/> entitled "A New Kind of Revolution." Also, Mequa has started a NEW blog this week with significant Epicurean aspects: <http://2043regression.wordpress.com/2043-regression-part-1/> He describes it as "A work-in-progress draft novel about the value of true philosophy and the downfall of civilization."

\*\*Our Menoeceus blog from Finland continued again this week with an entry on "Epicurus and Difficult Times." This post addressed some of the same themes mentioned below and in prior weeks, as our friends in Greece confront their economic crisis from an Epicurean perspective.

\*\*On Thursday I announced some progress in the 3d bust of Epicurus: \*\*1.3 Inches Of 3D Progress\*\* If any of you have been looking to create your own miniature chess-board with pieces that look like Epicurus, this is your lucky day. I have now received the first of my 3d printed models, but unfortunately the only one I have been able to create is only 1.3 inches tall. I have attached a photo I made next to my original - the 3D-printed version is the small dot on the right I have opened up the model to the public here: <https://www.shapeways.com/model/1227048/epicurus-072313.html> I

\*\*Significant Facebook discussions this week include from July 25 an extensive thread posted by Mequa about Islam and what might be an appropriate response. This morphed into a second thread which included participation from our friends in Hellas as to their own calculation of when and how to become involved in issues outside our own personal gardens.

\*\*On July 27 a post by BNA made note of Eduard Zeller's commentary on Epicurean attitudes toward learning and culture, in which Zeller repeated the false accusation that Epicurus was totally hostile to them.

\*\* On July 31 a thread about whether infinity exists was started by Hiram,

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Aug 10, 2013 10:06 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 08/09/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the tenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*This week I would like to highlight in some detail two projects that our Epicurean in England, Mequa, has been working on. I mentioned them in passing last week, but did not give them the attention they deserved:

\*\*The first is his blog, and in particular the entry "A New Kind of Revolution" <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/08/02/a-n...-of-revolution/> This particular entry is significant in itself, but in the comments you will find a very interesting exchange of ideas between Mequa and Hiram, our webmaster at the Society of Epicurus. <http://societyofepicurus.com/> The topic of the post is a "Personal revolution, in a classical Epicurean context, [which] comes with relinquishing any kind of trans-personal "higher good", including the Abrahamic conceptions of "God", or the enthronement of "virtue", and its modern equivalent of media-driven consumerism ("being a good consumer"), in favour of making one's personal higher good the selfish pursuit of one's own individual healthy mind in a healthy body, in accordance with an empirical view of one's nature as an individual human animal.

The topic inspired Hiram to make an insightful post on the relationship between Epicurean personal happiness and the emphasis on "selfishness" and "egoism" in objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand. Hiram pointed out that the ancient Epicureans did not take pride in their selfishness as do the Randians, nor did they harp on "egoism." Mequa replied that "There is nothing fundamentally shameful about looking out for one's own interests, or being prudent, which is condemned by those who really don't have your best interests at heart. Of course needs are selfish, that doesn't make them wrong. They are not a bottomless hole, they can be satisfied." Hiram replied to the effect that "I don't think caring for oneself is entirely selfish and, again, I don't think selfishness is a virtue, particularly whenever it impedes us from nurturing wholesome friendships. To proudly assume the label 'selfish' shows a lot of self-concern which oftentimes weakens people and makes them feel isolated." Mequa replied that "As used by the

enemies, "selfish" is frequently an insult and shaming tool to describe anyone not living up to expectations which often imply a servile relationship in an authoritarian framework. Attacking people for focusing on their "selfish" needs is a form of psychological tyranny." And in regard to egoism Mequa concluded "The individual self is not a willful living sacrifice, as Christianity would have it."

This is a topic that I personally find fascinating, and I recommend you read the whole exchange. Ayn Rand emphatically denied that her philosophy owed anything to anyone other than Aristotle, but it is clear that she was heavily influenced by Nietzsche, and Nietzsche was himself (with qualifications) a vocal admirer of Epicurus. My personal view is that Hiram and Mequa are essentially agreeing on one of the important areas where Ayn Rand went wrong -- her refusal to acknowledge the central role of friendship in achieving happy living. The issues are of course much more complex than that, but a modern student who is attempting to flesh out his or her own views can profit greatly from comparing Epicureanism to Objectivism.

\*\*The second of Mequa's projects that is coming along well is his new Novel-In-Progress - "2043 - Regression" <http://2043regression.wordpress.com/2043-regression-part-1/> It is never possible to predict where a project like this is going to lead (after all, as Epicureans, we reject the idea of both "Fate" and "divination"). However Mequa has now completed up through Part 3 of his work, and the result so far is in my humble opinion very very good. Mequa is constructing a fictional story that deals with the world of the near future (2043) in shambles, extrapolated directly from the current trend of events. In the midst of the civilizational collapse that appears likely to occur, Mequa's fictional archaeologist recovers significant Epicurean manuscripts from archeological digs into the remains of Roman Britain. The story outline has the makings of a Dan Brown style DaVinci code novel, and I think you will enjoy what you read. Please check it out and give any feedback you can to Mequa in comments to this or one of the relevant facebook posts.

\*\* In Non-Mequa news, our Epicurean friend in Finland has posted a new entry on his blog Menoeceus: <http://menoceus.blogspot.com/2013/08/epicur...-is-system.html> This one highlights that Epicureanism is a system from which one should not try to pick and choose -- and certainly not before one understands how all the parts fit together. Ilkka says: "Make a mind map, with ten bubbles arranged in a circle. Now draw a connection from every bubble to every other bubble. This mind map is nowhere near as complex as the one we'd have to draw for Epicureanism." This is an area of interest for Tom Merle as well, and he posted a link to his blog on the topic: <http://cultureplaces.blogspot.com/>

\*\* In the Garden Facebook page, Hiram started an interesting thread on "The need for moral enhancement" with a link that discusses an ethical approach to transhumanism (artificial enhancement of people) and the possibility of helping people who have innate serious moral flaws to become moral via enhancements.

\*\*Steve Klesner of "Turtles all the way down" blog let us know he is an ordained minister in the "Church of the Latter Day Dude." Not sure exactly what to make of that but figured it \*must\* be

mentioned!

\*\*Returning to Mequa for just a moment, he showed his photoshop skills in this creative meme:  
[https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...\\_count=1&ref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid..._count=1&ref=nf)

\*\*And as we begin to come to a close, I mention my own post of the week, in which I recorded an audio version of the fictional confrontation between Zeno and Epicurus in Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens" [https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...\\_count=1&ref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid..._count=1&ref=nf)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qo\\_TyfOdCWw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qo_TyfOdCWw)

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

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Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Aug 17, 2013 10:13 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 08/17/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the eleventh of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*First, I would like to express my condolences to Eric Reynolds, a longtime participant in the Epicurean Facebook pages, on the death of his mother. It appears that she lived a long and happy life all the way to age 85, and that is a goal which all of us might hope for, but which I doubt I will make myself!

\*\*This week I would like to highlight in some detail two projects that our Epicurean in England, Mequa, has been working on. I mentioned them in passing last week, but did not give them the attention they deserved:

\*\*Next, I encourage readers to follow Mequa's new Novel-In-Progress - "2043 - Regression" <http://2043regression.wordpress.com/2043-regression-part-1/> The novel has a very Epicurean theme, set in the midst of a civilizational collapse, when Mequa's fictional archaeologist recovers Epicurean manuscripts from an archeological dig in England. The story outline has the makings of a Dan Brown style DaVinci code novel, and I think you will enjoy what you read. Please check it out and give any feedback you can to Mequa in comments to this or one of the relevant facebook posts. Part One has been posted in audio format here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Obl4UysBM2I&feature=youtu.be>

\*\* Tom Merle posted an interesting New York Times article on the adverse health effects of low self esteem here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...99807276774995/> Tom wrote: "The following article, which is hidden behind a paywall on the NY Times, so I have pasted the entire essay, summarizes the negative effect on health that comes from a feeling of low self esteem. Neuroscience research is clearly finding the link between brain malfunctioning caused by a socioeconomic anxiety and physical maladies."

\*\*Stefan Steitferdt, formerly a very active poster here who is taking a sabbatical from Facebook, has this week made available his book "From Pain to Pleasure: The Proven Pathway to Happiness: Epicurean Happiness Guidance" in the Kindle Store as a Kindle edition for readers to purchase here <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00EHT11J4> for only \$4.99 in the US and 3.85 EUR in the EU (amazon.de, amazon.it, amazon.fr) and £3.32 at amazon.co.uk.

\*\*???????? ?????, otherwise known as he whose name I cannot type, posted an interesting quote, from the beginning of the letter to Herodotus, indicating that it does not mean "always learn new material" but instead "always stay mindful of the learnt material." [It is not necessary that we must be constantly at our desks trying to learn new facts about modern scientific speculations. What is necessary is that we learn and recognize the truth of our stoicheiomata (elementary principles), and that we constantly hold onto our memory and confidence in our principles while asking ourselves, as we go through the struggles of daily life, if our present thoughts are necessary to warrant distraction away from this beneficial mental focus on universal certainties as Epíkouros recommends. This meditation takes time to learn and, when learnt, takes place all the time.] ????? is extremely knowledgeable about the Greek and Latin texts and a great asset to our Facebook community. I cannot begin to aspire to his level of excellence in the languages. I aspire only to be able to type his name someday.

\*\*This week Elli Pensa uploaded the latest excellent paper from Christos Yapijakis (Garden of Athens) given at the 23th world congress of Philosophy, Athens 4-10 August 2013. The subject was "Ethical teachings of Epicurus based on human nature in the light of biological psychology" and the paper can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...00401016715621/>

\*\*And as we begin to come to a close, I mention my own post of the week, an audio version of Cicero's "Defense of Epicurus" from his book "On Ends." Full details can be found here: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6236> In case anyone is wondering, I find it very helpful in my study of Epicureanism to take the authoritative texts and listen to them in MP3 format while driving or exercising. This method has its limitations, but I like to immerse myself in the general structure of the argument to try to be sure I have the overall outline down, and I find these audio versions helpful for that. I also posted a selection from "A Few Days In Athens" in which Frances Wright argues persuasively, I think, about how Epicurus would have advised us to relate to those we consider disagreeable or even evil men. <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6233>

\*\*In the final news for the week, I am cautiously optimistic that I am making a little progress in scaling up the size of the 3d printable Epicurean bust. I have a 3 inch model on order that I am expecting to be of acceptable resolution, and once I verify that and post photos I will open that up for ordering from Shapeways. Ultimately, however, I am going to have to go back to the drawing board to get a master 3d mesh that has sufficient resolution to scale up to larger sizes. If anyone has any input or suggestions on how to do that, please let me know. It is possible that I need to cover my original bust in some kind of dust or other material to make give it more contrast when photographed. At any rate, I think that we are about to get access to a 3 inch size that is going to be relatively inexpensive (less than \$20.00), so we'll see soon. Please remember that I am simply uploading the mesh to the Shapeways website, and of course I am not asking for or getting any "cut" on the price. If you choose to deal with Shapeways you're unfortunately on your own. The 3d mesh file is available for free download at Shapeways and the original links I posted, so if you have a means to print it yourself, or wish to submit it to another company, please give it a try.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Aug 24, 2013 9:45 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 08/24/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twelfth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*This week I'd like to start with an update on the Epicurus 3d bust project. After finding alternative software, I have prepared a 3d mesh that is significantly higher resolution than before. You can view the current version in highest 3d resolution, with textured finish, here: <https://sketchfab.com/show/beb44363994b4ea98ab1586e10521e36> Unfortunately, the 3d printed version is not going to look that good. In converting that starting point (a .obj file) to mesh for printing, some resolution is lost, particularly around the eyes. Here's the current version of the mesh itself: <https://sketchfab.com/show/f32d9b354735439d8c0469e112a8071b> Note that both of these last links are full 3d and you can spin them around to examine all sides. I have one of these one order from Shapeways, which I am finding to be my 3d printer of choice, but I don't have one in yet to judge the result. As soon as I do, I will post photos so you can consider whether you wish to order one from Shapeways. Harking back to the scene of Hermarchus painting a portrait of Leontium in "A Few Days In Athens," I am probably at my personal limit to what I can hope to achieve artistically with the 3d software. It appears to me that what needs to be done from here is that we need someone with (1) a powerful computer, (2) the free "Blender" software, and (3) some degree of artistic talent. Probably what has happened is that the 3d "faces" in the area of the eyes have moved out of position, and those faces need to be adjusted (or new faces added) to recreate sharper eyes. Don't get me wrong, the current version without any adjustments at all may prove to be perfectly acceptable, but for the future I think someone eventually can do better. You can monitor the process of my models at this link: <https://www.shapeways.com/designer/CassiusAmicus> However I strongly advise you not to try to order anything without emailing me first. Please remember that I am simply uploading the mesh to the Shapeways website, and of course I am not getting any "cut" on the price. If you choose to deal with Shapeways your transaction is totally between you and them, and you're unfortunately on your own. The 3d mesh file is available for free download at Shapeways and the original links I posted, so if you have a means to print it yourself, or wish to submit it to another company, please give it a try. On the other hand if you don't have the ability to judge what you are likely to get before you order, please don't. I will continue working toward perfecting this process and will update this as progress occurs. My goal is to produce as high a resolution as at low a cost as possible. That means most of the models I am working with are hollow to keep down costs. I would hate for any of you to order something and be disappointed, so if you have any questions please ask me first here on Facebook or at [Cassius@newepicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@newepicurean.com)

\*\*Turning to the Garden of Epicurus facebook page, we had several good blog posts this week. First, Flavius Saxo posted on "Turtles all the way down" an interesting post comparing the Nicene Creed to Epicurus' statements about the gods. Well worth reading at: <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/2013/08/24/con...re-of-the-gods/>

\*\*In response to a number of questions, our facebook group leader Ilkka posted a comparison of Epicurean to religions at his blog Menoeceus: <http://menoeceus.blogspot.com/2013/08/epicur...-religions.html>

\*\*Hiram Crespo posted in the Facebook page an entry about the use of narratives in spreading a story such as that of Epicurus. I can't seem to find a link to post here, but it hit the forum on August 22 at 11:26 AM.

\*\*This past week included August 20th, so I posted a Twentieth Message here: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6257> I want to note that I am in full agreement with Hiram that it would be a significant next step for us to begin some kind of formal observation of the 20th. Perhaps we can explore some kind of group chat at a particular time on the 20th when as many of us as possible can chat, even if only for a moment, despite our widely varying time zones.

\*\*Tom and Brian and Dragan posted some good links this week, but I don't think I can figure out a permanent link to send you there directly -- check the Facebook page.

\*\*Also this week, I posted both an audio "reconstructed" version of the Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6248> and an audio version of the Letter to Menoeceus <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6271> I am working to complete an audio text-to-speech version of as much of the core textual material as possible. This week I should have all three letters of Epicurus completed, as I complete and post a version of the letter to Pythocles.

\*\*I continue to encourage readers to follow Mequa's new Novel-In-Progress - "2043 - Regression" which is now up to part 4: <http://2043regression.wordpress.com/part-4/> Mequa has also posted on his individual blog this week an interesting post (though not necessarily directly related to Epicureanism) "Respect is not necessarily earned" <http://mequa.wordpress.com/>

\*\*Last week I noted that Stefan Steitferdt, formerly a very active poster here who is taking a sabbatical from Facebook, has this week made available his book "From Pain to Pleasure: The Proven Pathway to Happiness: Epicurean Happiness Guidance" in the Kindle Store as a Kindle edition for readers to purchase here <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00EHT11J4> for only \$4.99 in the US and 3.85 EUR in the EU (amazon.de, amazon.it, amazon.fr) and £3.32 at amazon.co.uk. Stefan's interests Epicurean therapy and the practical aspects of living happily coincide with many of us here, so you might want to email him at <https://www.facebook.com/colotes.galenios> to say hello.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Aug 31, 2013 9:05 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 08/31/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the thirteenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*Like last week, I'd like to start with a review of where we are on the Epicurus 3d bust project. Let's backtrack for a second. Cicero records that the ancient Epicureans of his day wore rings and had drinking cups memorialized to the image of Epicurus, and we know that numerous busts of Epicurus were prepared, in that a significant number survive today. I was "lucky" enough at the start of my Epicurean research to find a bust of Epicurus on ebay, so there \*are\* modern reproductions, but they appear to be very hard to find. My intent is to remedy this for all fans of Epicurus by making a good-quality reproduction available to everyone at the lowest possible cost. The new technology of 3d printing lends itself perfectly to this, but I have experienced some difficulty in preparing a 3d "mesh" of sufficient resolution to make an acceptable model. The process starts with taking about 30 pictures of the existing model from many different angles, and then using on-line software to automatically generate a mesh. I have now prepared a second generation 3d mesh with results significantly better than my first effort. Resolution is still not what I would like it to be, but I think the results so far are probably acceptable for most needs. I have uploaded my mesh for free use by anyone who wants to print from it. The way this new business is getting started on the internet, businesses like Shapeways allow you to post models for public use, and then anyone who wants to use it can order a print

based on the model. Shapeways allows people who create meshes to create their own "stores" and charge premiums for the final product, but I have not done that. The mesh is available free, and the cost of printing and shipping is totally between you and Shapeways. In fact, 3d printers are becoming more and more available, so if you have access to a 3d printer you can download the mesh and create your own model locally. Here are some tips for ordering: Most of the cost of a model is materials, which means that hollow models are much cheaper than solid models. I have made these models hollow for that reason. It's very easy to fill the model with clay or some other material if you desire I am finding that Shapeways' "white and strong and flexible" plastic material gives the best result and looks most like a real statue. The largest size I have ordered and received so far is 3.2 inches tall, and I am pretty confident you will be pleased with any model that size or smaller. Larger sizes are going to suffer more from the "out of focus" problem, but I will post photos when I receive them so you can consider the result for yourself. In terms of cost, you should be able to order one for \$15.00 or so, direct from Shapeways, at the link below. Keep in mind that the model is really little more than a thin shell, and keep in mind if you decide to order your transaction is direct between you and Shapeways. To repeat for emphasis, and to avoid misunderstandings, I get no "cut" of your payment, and I am making the 3d file available freely. Again, let me recommend that you order one of the smaller versions first to be sure the results are acceptable to you. Once you see what you're getting, you are in a much better position to experiment with the material options. I hope you find this project useful! <https://www.shapeways.com/designer/CassiusAmicus>

\*\*Turning to the Garden of Epicurus facebook page, we had a greater-than-normal selection of good blog posts this week.

\*\*First, Adrian Poole posted about finding the source of the quote in the letter to Menoecus where Epicurus disagrees with the poet who said "...Much worse off, however, is the person who says it were well not to have been born 'but once born pass to Hades' portals as swiftly as may be.' " Adrian points out that Kaufmann, in his footnote to a passage from Nietzsche's 'The Birth of Tragedy,' notes that the story/quote originates from Sophocles' 'Oedipus at Colonus.' , where Silenus, a companion of Dionysus, to King Midas, says...What is best of all is utterly beyond your reach: not to be born, not to be, to be nothing. But the second best for you is-to die soon." (Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', Kaufmann translation)

\*\* In probably the most-discussed post of the week, Mequa posted on the important topic of free will, and Tom Merle followed up with a good article from a physicist. These posts raised the question: "Is "hard" free will, or metaphysical libertarianism, a credible position today? And is it really necessary for Epicurean ethics? By that I mean the position that human acts of free will are independent of deterministic or mechanistic causes, but are "self-caused", and thus free will involves an aspect of "could have done otherwise." I highly recommend reading the discussion that follows both posts. We know from the letter to Menoecus and from Lucretius that Epicurus parted company with Democritus and made "free will" an important part of his philosophy. The meaning and implications of "free will" however, are deeper than what initially meets the eye, so it is well worth reflecting on this issue so you will be ready when the topic recurs in real life - as it regularly does.

\*\* Hiram Crespo also posted video by a Professor Anton on shame and/or guilt as a means of discouraging anti social behavior.

\*\* Surazeus Simon Seamount posted about the latest status of his epic poem about Greek philosophers, called Scientia Hermetis, or Hermead. He has written biographical poems about Leukippos, Demokritos, and Epikouros, and now is writing a tale of Philodemos of Gadara, who brought Epicureanism to Roma. <http://facebook.com/Hermead> I highly recommend Surazeus' work for anyone who wants an intellectual challenge.

\*\*Steve Klessner at <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/2013/08/29/like-if-true/> blogged this week on relating with other people in religion and philosophy through facebook.

Our group leader Ilkka posted this week on <http://menoceus.blogspot.com/2013/08/all-th...moderation.html> All things in Moderation, pointing out the important limitations of that phrase. This is a big theme of mine as well, and Ilkka hits it: "We can give general advice, sure, but in all cases the deciding factor is always the context. "Is it okay to cut people with a sharp metal object?" "Are you talking about a mugger or a surgeon?" To be able to answer this question in real life situations, one must study the Principles of Epicureanism. And then one must go and practice what one has learned because save you it can."

\*\*Another post from Hiram also had good comments - where he cited Plato's quote about those who fail to get involved in politics being doomed to be ruled by their inferiors. That is a continuing question for us and the discussion was very worthwhile. Hiram also posted on 'Survival of the Nicest', a proposal that cooperation, not competition, led to our survival.

\*\*Also well worth reading is Davey Lee's latest post at his blog : <http://ahumanistsperspective.wordpress.com/2013/08/31/tho...ng-called-life/> "Thoughts on this thing called life." And On Chaos And Commandments" <http://ahumanistsperspective.wordpress.com/2013/08/31/on-...d-commandments/>

\*\* My own contribution to the world of Epicurus this week was to release my last text-to-speech version of Epicurus' three letters - this time the Letter to Pythocles: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6277>

And in closing I almost forgot -- this is the season to remember a number of historic events of relevance to the Epicurean world, as described here: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6283>

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

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Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Sep 07, 2013 7:49 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 09/07/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fourteenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*As the world turns and we see if the "great nations" can succeed in throwing the world into another war frenzy, it has been a particularly good time to be able to turn to the Garden of Epicurus facebook page, and our study of Epicurus, for some sanity.

\*\*The week started and ended on approximately the same note, with two related posts. First, Steve Klesner posted a spreadsheet in which he's been working on a categorization of major philosophers, and he made the point that perhaps the defining split between Epicurean and Stoic thinkers, at least in the modern world, is their various positions on deism vs atheism. That produced a good discussion on the Epicurean view of the gods, which is always a controversial topic.

\*\*The week ended with a great find by Ed Lee - an online copy of Philodemus' "On Methods of Inference" as translated and commented on by Phillip and Estelle DeLacy. In my own case I had heard of this work, but never found a copy. Perhaps my finding it late was for the better, because I am now in a much better position to appreciate it than if I had found it earlier. Both the text by Philodemus and the commentary by DeLacy are very very helpful on the topic that Steve Klesner raised - the differences between Stoics and Epicureans. I won't try to summarize all the important points here, but let me say this as an encouragement for you to spend some time with this work: It is true that some of the terminology is off-putting; "methods of inference" does not sound like a sexy topic, and there is lots of discussion of "signs" and "contraposition" that seem hopelessly dark. It may be that you will find the commentary by Delacy at the end of

the book something you should read before you read the Philodemus text itself. But let me say this in summary: The issue here is vital. The Stoics, like the Aristotelians and the Platonists before them, derive their views of "virtue" and the "first cause" from a process of "reason" that presupposes the ability of "reason" (whatever that means) to transcend the evidence of the senses. The Epicureans, in response, say that all TRUE reason is grounded directly in the evidence of the senses. Whether or not you care to follow all the intricacies of the debate, at least make a mental note that Epicurus reacted strongly against this Platonic view. Delacy points out that even Aristotle held a similar view: "Aristotle regards empiricism as inadequate because he believes that observation can never give necessary connections between objects. In the absence of causal knowledge the empirical scientist must base his knowledge on a study of signs, and inferences from signs are not reliable except in cases where the inferences may be converted into valid syllogisms.... Though Aristotle recognizes that observation is the ultimate source of knowledge, he believes that knowledge can be obtained only through a combination of observation and reason." These are deep issues, but well worth considering. The text is found here: <https://archive.org/stream/philode...age/n5/mode/2up>

\*\*The other big post/topic of the week was Mequa's "How Epicurus Can Make You Happier." An audio version can be found here [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=FK10UJMOSXY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=FK10UJMOSXY). and the blog post itself is here: <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/09/03/how...ke-you-happier/> I sometimes joke about Mequa's posts being a little on the dark side, but I trust that the jokes are clear enough that everyone remains in good humor. This post by Mequa was extremely well done and is a great example of his writing talent. Well worth reading.

\*\* Another find in the book racks this week was a bilingual (Latin and Attic) text of Diogenes Laertius, posted by Aristotelis Ellanios Kerasovitis. <http://books.google.gr/books?id=PoEsA...5%CE%BD&f=false>

\*\*That reminds me that to point out that I have attempted to accumulate links to important Epicurean books on my web page here: [http://www.newepicurean.com/?page\\_id=306](http://www.newepicurean.com/?page_id=306) I hope as people come across new finds, such as Ed Lee has in forwarding me links to both the Philodemus work and the work by Frances Wright, everyone will post that to the Garden of Epicurus facebook page so we can keep track and make lists of links.

\*\* And as the week came to an end, I posted a link to an excellent article on end-of-life issues. As I described it in the post on the Facebook Group, it is "A good article on an important topic that we all face: "For life has no terrors for him who has thoroughly understood that there are no terrors for him in ceasing to live." (Letter to Menoecus) <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB1000...WhatsNewsSecond>

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Sep 14, 2013 8:10 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 09/14/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifteenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*The week let's pick up with something briefly mentioned last week - the online copy of Philodemus' "On Methods of Inference" as translated and commented on by Phillip and Estelle DeLacy. (Link at end of this paragraph) I have had much more time this week to read through it, and discuss it with some friends on the facebook page, and it is tremendously interesting. DeLacy's commentary is also very helpful in putting it all in context - which is important, as the text starts in the middle of an argument. I'll admit that the text can be a little dense, but if you start out knowing what to expect I think you'll find it very helpful for learning more about the Epicurean method of thinking. Just approach the text realizing this: One of the BIG issues in philosophy is this issue of "methods of inference." How do we move from the known, to those things that are unknown, and make intelligent decisions about them? This is the issue which Philodemus addresses, and points out how the Stoics approach the matter one way, while the Epicureans approach it another. Obviously I am partisan and think the Epicureans were correct, but here's a way it will help you to frame the issue as you read this: "Methods of Inference" refers in general to the method by which you take direct evidence of one matter, and then derive a conclusion about a second matter where you do NOT have direct evidence. In the legal field, this is called using "circumstantial evidence." There are many legal rules which address that in our modern court systems. At risk of oversimplification, here's the focus: Stoics hold that

it is permissible to "reason" your way to a conclusion (in most cases, using what we might call a "logical formula", or a "syllogism") even though your particular conclusion may have NO direct evidence to support it whatsoever. In other words, if you can "reason" your way to a formula that is internally consistent, you may conclude a thing exists even though you have never seen anything remotely like that thing in the real world. Think about some of the weird theories in modern physics for a possible example of this. Epicureans, in contrast, reason by ANALOGY, meaning that they hold that reasoning must be STRICTLY based on evidence from things in the real world. Again at risk of oversimplification, If the theory has no parallel or analogy of any kind in the real world, then Epicureans dismiss that reasoning as pure fantasy, and dismiss it as a valid method of inference. If you have any legal background or training, especially in the American legal system, you will quickly recognize in Philodemus a parallel with our modern legal questions about formation and use of circumstantial evidence. But don't let this closing remark fool you - this is not a dry technical exercise - it goes to the heart of the validity of every conclusion Epicurus ever reached.

The text is found here: <https://archive.org/stream/philode...age/n5/mode/2up>

\*\* Another major post this week was added by Elli Pensa, a translation of an article entitled "Epicurus' Humanism" by Dimitris Dimitriadis, from the Epicurean Garden of Alexandroupolis. This post got a respectable number of "likes" but not quite as many comments as it deserved. It is fascinating to read what our friends in Greece have to say, and how they apply Epicurus to some very difficult current circumstances. The article is well worth reading in full, but a couple of key passages were: "More or less he [Epicurus] wanted to say that in order to philosophize in life, to defend your dignity, to live happily every day of the rest of your life, help your neighbor in difficulties you must have your eyes and ears and your mind open and observe carefully what is happening around you and find multiple causes ("Aitio paronta"). He wanted to say that in order to win your happiness in this unprecedented phenomenon called life you must learn to observe the world outside and inside you with open eyes and mind that knows how to think." Also..... \*\*The epicurean type does not stick to nostalgia but proceeds to action as he considers that happiness depends on him. That is why the epicurean philosophy is the philosophy of action. It is an action of enlightenment capable of opening the eyes, the ears and the mind of other people. It is an action related to human freedom as the highest value and not as a social morality or duty.

<https://word.office.live.com/wv/WordView.aspx?FBsrc=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fdownload%2>

I REALLY appreciate Elli taking the time to get these posted in English!

\*\*Late in the week we closed out with a recurring topic: Free Will. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...14403545315368/> Mequa posted a link to an article by Jean-Marie Guyau from 1878 which compared Epicurus' own views to those moderns who are frequently considered to be Epicurean. Free Will can be a difficult topic, but it's hugely important, so I hope you'll take the time to review the back and forth in this thread. One gem in that thread that you don't want to miss is a quote from Epicurus himself that is not widely

available. One of our friends here has had access to advanced study of some of the Herculaneum material, and he was able to post an excerpt from Epicurus' "Peri Physeos" book 25, part 34.21, which is believed to be accurate: "Many people who are capable of achieving this result or that result, nevertheless often fail to do so—because of themselves—not because of nature, or any responsibility they had to their atoms. Particularly these human beings we rebuke and correct, while also avoiding them, because they follow their disordered inborn nature, just as any other animal. For, in fact, the nature of the atoms in their bodies has contributed nothing to restrict many of their behaviors, actions, and attitudes—it is our own mental developments which themselves possess most of the responsibility for our actions." This is an outstanding confirmation of the statement made in the Letter to Menoeceus, and affirmed by Lucretius, of Epicurus' attitude toward free will.

\*\*Mequa also posted an interesting diagram comparing atomism in terms of atoms in Nature to individuals as components of society.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...14313128657743/>

\*\* In other posts, Hiram posted on a review of the movie Elysium:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...13019005453822/>

\*\* And a member of the group (who types his name in Greek which I have a hard time duplicating! 😊 ) posted a link to Athanaeus' eulogy for Epicurus:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...12789158810140/>

\*\*I am not aware of too many independent blog posts this week, but here's one from Mequa worth reading: <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/09/14/on-...al-engineering/> The title may not sound directly Epicurean, but it does relate to a topic of importance in Epicurean thought - the organization of a happy society.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Sep 21, 2013 8:58 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 09/21/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the sixteenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*News is a little lean this week. I am still immersed in Philodemus' "On Methods of Inference," and to make matters worse, our friend Ed Lee has now found us an online copy of the fragments of Philodemus' "On Rhetoric" which can be downloaded here: <http://www1.union.edu/wareht/books/P...0Hubbell%29.pdf> Thanks again Ed! I don't perceive the On Rhetoric to be as useful as On Methods of Inference, but there are definitely some parallels between the two works that will be valuable to pursue.

\*\*Also on the book front, I am working on updating my NewEpicurean library links, and getting a better list of the core works available on the internet. I have failed to complete my first project this weekend as I hoped, but if you are burning to get a copy of Cyril Bailey's "Epicurus - The Extant Remains," a PDF is available here; <https://archive.org/details/Bailey...ainsCyrilBailey> I will work to improve this page and get a version readable on-line. The existing copy is also missing pages 156 and 157, so I will be uploading a new copy and fixing the page soon. Bailey's book is one of the best English resources available, and I look forward to this being more readily available to a wider audience, as it does not apparently appear now in Google Books or other online sources.

\*\*Several interesting posts this week:

\*\*\*Ilkka added a post on the Epicurean Good life: <http://menoceus.blogspot.com/2013/09/epicurean-good-life.html>

\*\*\*Hiram added a post on Etymology and Natural Justice <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...15838861838503/>

\*\*\*Mequa added a post on True and False Ataraxia <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...15763925179330/>

\*\*\*Steve K. added a post on Epicurean Symbols <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...16541648434891/>

\*\*\*I added a link to a series of charts on perspective on time  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...16509388438117/>

\*\*\*Ilkka posted a second time, this time on Epicureanism v Stoicism  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...16807888408267/>

\*\*\*And in the high-volume commentary post of the week, Hiram ignited a fire on use of mind-altering substances! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...15489635206759/>

\*\*\*Lynn Relph posted on hedonics v eudamonia and health  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...16809115074811/>

\*\*\*And Mequa ended up the week with "After the Veil Falls"  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...17549281667461/>

Sorry for the short post this week. I am consumed in working through Philodemus and turning his arguments into something a little more "elementary," but I hope to have something more to post on that this week. It's a fascinating book and the arguments are very helpful for expanding some of the thoughts in both Epicurus' own letters, and passages of Lucretius.

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Sep 28, 2013 7:23 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 09/28/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the seventeenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*Once again news is a little slow this week. First of all, I embarrassed myself by missing the Twentieth and not recognizing that I missed it til three days later. I'll work to make sure the doesn't happen again. When I did recover, I posted an update to what I consider some of the most important on-line links to Epicurean literature. While Epicurus.info and Epicurus.net and others contain excellent material, it's always good to trace issues of translation back to some of the classic academic authorities, and this week I was able to get online a good working link to Cyril Bailey's classic "Epicurus, the Extant Remains." This is probably the best source of text reference material available, and though there have been very good books since this one was issued, it is probably the best free resource generally available. It does not contain Lucretius' poem, but Bailey translated that as well. The links are all available here: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6369> but the direct link you really don't want to miss is this one: <https://archive.org/stream/Epicuru...age/n1/mode/2up>

Other highlights of the week include:

\*\*\*Hiram Crespo's post on the Architecture of Pleasure at the International Society of Epicurus - <http://societyofepicurus.com/on-the-architecture-of-pleasure/> This included a good discussion with comments on the facebook page of the philosophical implications of architectural choices.

\*\*\*Mequa's "False Philosophies Hammering the Ego," which he summarized as "I remain a committed Individualist. Received wisdom is for merciless critique, not slavish acceptance. And my own, individual, critical-thinking mind is the weapon to march on with in the bloody battlefield of the war of ideas. A strong healthy ego is paramount, "on your feet", not on your knees before the hallowed and faux-humble opinions of others out of social pressure and weak-mindedness - no matter how much weak and insecure minds may resent your confident judgment and seek to tear you down to their level." <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/09/25/fal...mering-the-ego/>

\*\*\* Last chronologically for the week was my "An Epicurean Message Hits Home 2000 years later in London" <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6377> This was a discussion of the well known "Pan having sex with a goat" statue found in the Villa of the papyri in Herculaneum. Excellent comments from several group friends followed at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...20330861389303/> The point of both the post and comments was that art can serve the purpose of dramatically illustrating the evils of religion, and the comments contained several suggestions that would make great artwork in the Epicurean world of tomorrow.

That's it for this week. We'll work to stir things up for next week!

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Oct 05, 2013 8:13 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 10/05/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the eighteenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\*This week I am going to take the liberty of highlighting the release of my latest free ebook, entitled "Against the Men of the Crowd." The majority of the ebook is previously-released material which I like to compile in a single volume, as an aid to those who may choose to download only one book on Epicurus while they are downloading. By including the majority of the ancient texts (which in the epub age is no problem to do) I hope to increase chances that more people will read the material. The book may be downloaded for free in epub format here: <http://newepicurean.com/?p=6394> This link also contains links to MP3 downloads of the title essay, and a youtube presentation of the same audio version.

The major new material and reason for releasing the new ebook, is the "Against the Men of the Crowd" essay. As in much of my material, I have tried to avoid personal theorizing of my own in favor of working with and rearranging the ancient texts to bring out what I think are patterns of

thought that are not easy to recognize for casual readers who do not have time to pore over the fragments of texts and piece them together for themselves.

The impetus for this particular arrangement comes from my reading of Philodemus' "On Methods of Inference," which I again want to thank Ed Lee for bringing to my attention. Much of the texts of Philodemus from Herculaneum is so fragmentary as to be almost useless, but "On Methods of Inference" is very well preserved. It contains extensive argument in an area I find fascinating, and which I believe led Norman DeWitt to some of his most creating thinking on the role of "reason" in the canon of truth. The essential point is that much of the revolutionary nature of Epicurean thought derives from its rejection of the views of earlier philosophies (and religions) that there is a source of knowledge higher than the faculties given us by Nature (the five senses, anticipations, and pain/pleasure). It's not possible to read through Philodemus without seeing how important this issue was to them, but because the book by Epicurus which focused on this (his Canon of Truth) is now lost, the issue is addressed only peripherally in the major texts with which most people are familiar. Lucretius gives a rather extensive discussion of it in defending the validity of the senses in Book IV, but Philodemus really brings out the details of the argument, which was conducted primarily in his time against the Stoics, rather than directly in the name of Plato. The translation of De Lacy is the basis for what I put together in "Against the Men of the Crowd," but even here I have had to rework some of the terminology in an effort to make it more understandable. This is a very complex issue and I am sure that what I have done can be significantly improved. I hope I have managed to avoid any huge errors, but I welcome any suggestions for improving the text of this first edition. I would have liked to have spent more time preparing this before publication, but as usual I wanted to balance "getting it right" with getting the point "out there" where people might benefit from it. Please do not hesitate to let me know your criticisms or suggestions.

\*\*As a follow-on post on the same subject at the garden of Epicurus facebook page, I posted about a selection from Nietzsche (on Parmenides) which I believe addresses much the same subject. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...24344607654595/> That post has generated a number of good comments from Steve Klesner and Ed Lee, and I think the comments Nietzsche made are right up the same alley of thought as the ancient Epicureans were pursuing.

\*\*Other highlights of the week include:

\*\*\* One of Mequa's Blog Posts (How Epicurus Can Make You Happier) was picked up and linked by a Non-Epicurean web page. Not sure I can endorse the "lifecoachhealer" in return 😊 but glad to see them pick up Mequa's link! <http://www.lifecoachhealer.com/cultivate-self-love>

\*\*\*Mequa also posted a blog entry on "Blind Love" <http://mequa.wordpress.com/2013/09/26/blind-love/> Not explicitly Epicurean in wording, but there are obvious parallels in his thoughts to those of Epicurus' recommendations regarding keeping sexual passion under control, on which Lucretius wrote at length.

\*\*\* Tom Merle posted a link to an interesting article on scientific proof of "10 Easy Things That Will Make you Happier" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...22962524459470/>

\*\*\*Hiram reminded everyone to subscribe to the Twitter feed at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...22846704471052/>

\*\*\*Hiram also posted a good link to a Christopher Hitchens quote on how standard religious views lead to the conclusion that the world is essentially a divinely-created North Korea <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...21230884632634/>

\*\*\*Dragan posted a good graphic on remembering that what we have now we once only hoped for: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...21834641238925/>

\*\*\*Mequa posted a link to a good article that gave a decent assessment of Epicurus but portrayed him with someone else's face! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...21263331296056/>

That's it for this week. I think things are a little slow in some of the personal blogs perhaps indeed because of the time of year, as seasons start to shift, and people get distracted. Hopefully things will pick up soon, because in a world of increasing tension, Epicureanism is needed as never before!

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Oct 12, 2013 6:23 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 10/12/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the nineteenth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* So far October is proving to be a slow month. Here are the highlights of this past week:

\*\*Our leader at the Epicurus page has started a new Q&A feature: "<https://www.facebook.com/epicureanphilo...151971452018729> ASK A QUESTION! In this round ask a question about the [Principal Doctrines](#) (though other questions will go into the list, too). What is unclear? What is the thing that has been bugging you? Is there an aspect that just doesn't make sense? Now's the chance to get it off your chest!

\*\* At "The Epicurus Blog" <http://hanrott.com/blog/2013/10/> there's a new post on "Should women be allowed to cover their faces?" It concludes "Epicurus believed in living while you are alive. He advocated pleasure, on the basis that this is the only life you have, and why be miserable? He didn't advocate excess, but the enjoyment of friends, of nature, of wine (in moderation), and good food( also in moderation). None of this chimes with ascetic Islamism where you can't even see through your niqab properly, or see obstructions on the sidewalk. If you want to return to the Middle Ages, do so in the Empty Quarter, complete with camel." I am not familiar with Robert Hanrott, who runs this blog, but will keep an eye on it in the future.

\*\*At this following link there is a new review of the book by Robert J. Roecklein, "Machiavelli and Epicureanism: An Investigation into the Origins of Early Modern Political Thought." <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2013/2013-10-10.html>

\*\*At the facebook page, Mequa posted an interesting analysis of whether human fears (like desires) can also be categorised into 1) natural and necessary, 2) natural and not necessary, 3) not natural and not necessary. The post and following discussion can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...25937494161973/>

\*\*Hiram Crespo posted this week on adding Epicurean religion to a page at the Huffington Post where they were soliciting entries for "new religions." You can find the Huffington Post entry at the following link (scroll down the page and look in the "slides" section, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/07/cre...l#slide=2994520> The post describing this at the Garden of Epicurus is here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...27505537338502/>

\*\*Most recently for the week, I added a post about some new reading I am doing on Aristotle and Epicurus, in a book entitled "Two Studies in the Greek Atomists." I don't know about you, but the word "Atomism" is one of those words that is can put me to sleep like no other. It strikes me like "hedonism" - modern culture has succeeded in creating such negative image

associations with the word that it is almost impossible to get enthusiastic about studying it. But I am convinced there is a lot of great interest that needs exploration and popularization of the Epicurean position. As the author of the book writes: "Broadly speaking, the Atomists defended the atomic theory of matter, mechanical causation, the infinity of the universe, the plurality of worlds, and the transience of our world. The Aristotelians defended the continuous theory of matter, the supremacy of final causes, the finite universe, and the uniqueness and eternity of our world. The Atomist party ...was taken up at the end of the fourth century by Epicurus, and again in Roman times by Lucretius. The opposite party consisted of Plato, Aristotle and his pupils, and the Stoics." These are huge issues, and though in many ways the Epicurean view has become the standard view, the Epicurean origins of these positions has been lost. It would be of great help to the name of Epicurus to point out how the standard "heroes" of philosophy, including Plato and Aristotle, were so wrong in so many ways, while Epicurus was pointing the way to the future.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...27973163958406/>

That's it for this week. We'll report again next week, on the day before the Twentieth!

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

\*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Oct 19, 2013 9:25 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 10/19/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the TWENTIETH of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* So far October continues to be a slow month. Here are the highlights of this past week:

\*\* Our friend Christos Tsigarides has posted an interesting series of photos of a "shrine" he has erected in Greece in honor of Epicurus. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...28440903911632/> I am afraid I have not been able to get a grip on too many of the details about where this is or what it entails, but there are more photos and details here: <https://www.facebook.com/christos.tsiga...202528112233264> I have never had the opportunity to visit Greece myself so I hope we can find out some more details about this.

\*\* Dragan Nikolic reminded us that this week was the birthday of Frederich Nietzsche <https://www.facebook.com/christos.tsiga...202528112233264> I've only in recent years become familiar with Nietzsche's views on Epicurus, but there are many common areas, and Nietzsche gave much credit to Epicurus for the far-sightedness of his views.

\*\*Mark Cubbedge posted that he had a hard-cover copy of DeWitt's "Epicurus and His Philosophy" available for sale. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...31588236930232/> Anyone interested should message him directly.

\*\*Tom Merle asked a historical question that still awaits an answer: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...31992360223153/>

\*\*And then last but certainly not least, Mequa posted a link to an article by the name ""Mater Matters: The Female in Lucretius' De Rerum Natura": I have not yet had time to read this in detail, but it's a good scholarly article. It appears to comment mostly on Lucretius from a "feminist" perspective, but even as I post this update it has sparked an interesting conversation about rights in general. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...31992360223153/>

That's it for this week. TOMORROW IS THE TWENTIETH SO BE SURE TO REMEMBER OUR HERITAGE FROM EPICURUS!

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\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Oct 26, 2013 7:17 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 10/19/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the TWENTIETH of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

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That's it for this week. TOMORROW IS THE TWENTIETH SO BE SURE TO REMEMBER OUR HERITAGE FROM EPICURUS!

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\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Oct 26, 2013 7:57 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 10/26/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-first of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and

easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* October continues to close out as a slow month, but the week did have a few highlights:

\*\* This was an Athenian geography week of sorts. Tom Merle posted a copy of the "map of ancient Athens" that shows the supposed location of the ancient schools, including the Garden of Epicurus. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...32262796862776/> Christos Tsagarides continues to have local contacts with the area, and he posted several of his own photos and comments about the area. Tom posted a second thread <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...32734786815577/> which contained an aerial photo of the same area. Hiram posted a direct link to Christos' "shrine" that is now in service in Athens. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...28440903911632/> For a third post rounding out the same issues, the topic turned to dates when Tom asked when Epicurus first established the garden. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...31992360223153/>

\*\*Andreas Lurelius posted photographs of a medallion he made with a copy of the etching of the bust of Epicurus inside. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...32262796862776/> Definitely well done. Combined with the 3d bust that became available this year, we're moving in the direction of recreating the ancient habit of having Epicurus' image on cups and rings.

\*\*This past week contained the 20th of October, and the day didn't slide past this month. On my own blog, I posted another in my series of posts about Epicurus' criticisms of the "logic" of the Platonic and Aristotelian schools. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...32208440201545/> This particular post sprang from my reading of a book on Epicurean thought by David Furley, in which he discussed in great detail the Epicurean view of "indivisibility of atoms" and "voluntary action." These are issues that tend to be dismissed as irrelevant to the modern world, but the reasons they were disputed in the ancient world frequently remain valid today, and over time I hope to be able to explain the implications of these issues more clearly.

\*\*On the same topic discussed in my 20th post, I continued the discussion of distinguishing Epicurus and Aristotle with a quote on the topic from Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens." <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...33803590042030/> I was asked how the quote related to the topic of the blog post, and I agree that it's not entirely obvious at first glance. But I DO think there is an important relationship, and it is the very one I am trying to flesh out more clearly. First, the quote from Frances Wright, which follows her accusation that Aristotle was "pedantic." : "In the schools you have hitherto frequented," she continued, addressing the youth, "certain images of virtue, vice, truth, knowledge, are presented to the imagination, and these abstract qualities, or we may call them, figurative beings, are made at once the objects of speculation and adoration. A law is laid down, and the feelings and opinions of men are predicated upon it; a theory is built, and all animate and inanimate nature is made to speak in its support; an hypothesis is advanced, and all the mysteries of nature are treated as explained. You have heard of, and studied various systems of philosophy; but real philosophy is opposed

to all systems. Her whole business is observation; and the results of that observation constitute all her knowledge. She receives no truths, until she has tested them by experience; she advances no opinions, unsupported by the testimony of facts; she acknowledges no virtue, but that involved in beneficial actions; no vice, but that involved in actions hurtful to ourselves or to others."

On the face of it, the meaning of this can definitely be hard to see, because most of us think in the terms described, that of laying down a law, building a theory, and using it to explain as wide a series of phenomena as possible. Good enough, but only so long as the theory accurately embraces facts! For example, take a look at almost any paragraph in Aristotle's "Prior Analytics" <https://archive.org/stream/organon...ge/214/mode/2up> The entire work is made up of intricate formulas of the sort like "If A=B, and B=C, and some D is a subset of B but not E....." etc. The validity and usefulness of such word-gaming depends ENTIRELY on whether A, B, C, D, and E have been accurately observed. It adds NOTHING to knowledge to place these symbols in a syllogism if the underlying observation (through the senses) is not accurate. I will work to explain this more clearly over time, but in order to understand why this is a significant issue, it is extremely helpful to compare "Prior Analytics" with the contrary arguments of Philodemus in "On Methods of Inference." <http://archive.org/stream/philode...ge/126/mode/2up>

\*\*As the week drew on we had a number of posts which hinted at the sort of political issues I usually personally try to avoid, at least for the present. But Epicurean theory has definite implications on social/political issues, and this week saw posts on "the Sharing Economy vs the Consumer Economy" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...33476443408078/> , the "hardwiring of happiness" in the brain <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...34677919954597/> , Bertrand Russell on idleness <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...35083829914006/>. and even a billboard referring to John Galt. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...35298183225904/>

\*\*If I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety! Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Nov 02, 2013 9:34 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 11/2/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-second of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* Welcome to a new month, which is already off to a hopping start on the Garden of Epicurus Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/> Let me take a break from the normal format to speak generally and frankly about the status of the Facebook group.

\*\*First, it came to my attention that I have failed to realize that the Group has no active Administrator. For some reason I had thought that on Jaakko Wallenius' untimely death earlier this year, the "ownership of the Group and of the "Epicurus" facebook "page" had been placed in the hands of one of our group regulars. Apparently, that is not the case, as both the "page" and the "group" both show Jaako as the only Admin. I have sent an email to Jaakko's wife asking for her help in transferring the page and group to Ilkka V., and hopefully that can be accomplished soon. As it is, since neither Ilkka nor any others of us are admins of the page, none of us are getting notices when new people join, or when emails are sent to the page itself.

\*\*This is a very unfortunate situation. The Facebook Page and Group have been extremely valuable to me personally, and I am sure to many of you as well. We need this fixed, and promptly. Hopefully we will hear from Mrs. Wallenius soon and we can begin to take advantage of the facilities offered to admins. That will allow us to know when new people join the group and offer them a proper welcome, which we have not been doing. I am a member of several private groups, and when managed properly they can be extremely productive. We need that to happen here with the Garden of Epicurus too.

\*\*If we are not able to get Administrative control over the Group (at least), then I will probably propose that we start a new Group and migrate over to where Ilkka and others can be official Admins. That would allow us to begin to set up the outlines of a functioning "loose organization" of our own where we as fans of Epicurus can work together to ensure the continuation and growth of our worldwide association.

\*\*In the past, there have been several attempts to set up "forums" of the older style (the pre-Facebook era), and we can eventually return to that format if needed or desired. However in

this day and age Facebook is clearly the place to be, so this is a tide that we probably don't want to swim against.

\*\*All this discussion came about because of an innocent post welcoming a new group member from Australia. I received an email at my NewEpicurean page asking why his group request had not been approved. Investigation of that led to discovery of the Admin problem. Now I realize we have missed many opportunities to welcome new members and promote new discussions that would benefit us all. Many opportunities have been lost, and that needs to stop. Now.

\*\*Among the things that we can learn from a group that functions more aggressively is a topic of great interest to the ancient Epicureans: how to handle disagreements. In one of the threads this week, I posted several excerpts from the Herculaneum fragments of Philodemus entitled "On Frank Criticism." These are excellent reading for any occasion, but particularly good as we consider our participation in an Epicurean discussion group:

\*\*\*\* "Let us make it clear to them that the goods of friendship are very durable and that flattery is the antagonist of friendship; let us also consider well the goods that arise from frank speech, both (the frank speech) directed towards one's intimate associates, and (the frank speech) directed towards all men, and let us avoid as vain the company of adulators, and still more let us not mix with them but seek cohabitation with those who speak candidly."

\*\*\*\*From the introduction to the translation: "For the Epicureans, conversation and reasoning together are indispensable. Παρησία is a type of ομιλία, intimately connected with friendship, though it is classified neither as an art nor as a virtue; rather, frank speech is an approximate or conjectural method used by friends in the therapeutic technique for the healing of souls, comparable to the methods employed by physicians in the art of healing and by pilots in the art of navigation."

\*\*\*\*Also from the introduction: "Philodemus has a positive view of the human condition and the possibility of improvement. All make progress, but some have matured more than others. He rejects an inconsiderate and abusive approach to moral ills, advocating rather a gentle kind of treatment. One should not revile, scorn, or treat those who err spitefully, but should rather sympathize with them; their natural weakness should be pitied and forgiven, and the teacher should apply frank speech opportunely and cheerfully in order to increase the goodwill between him and those who are being prepared. If the young are ridiculed or inopportunistly reproved, they become downcast, accept criticism badly, and cannot endure to listen to the teacher with goodwill. Excessive harshness may cause students to disassociate themselves, psychologically or physically, from the community."

\*\*\*\*"...even if we demonstrate logically that, although many fine things result from friendship, there is nothing so grand as having one to whom one will say what is in one's heart and who will listen when one speaks. For our nature strongly desires to reveal to some people what it thinks."

\*\*\*\*"we shall admonish others with great confidence, both now and when those {of us} who have become offshoots of our teachers have become eminent. And the encompassing and most important thing is, we shall obey Epicurus, according to whom we have chosen to live..."

\*\*\*\*"For how is he [the wise man] going to hate the one who errs, though not desperately, when he knows that he himself is not perfect and rem[inds [himself] that everyone is accustomed to err?"

That's it for today. Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*\* Gosh one of those quotes was so good, let's repeat it: \*\*\*"And the encompassing and most important thing is, we shall obey Epicurus, according to whom we have chosen to live..."\*\*\*

\*\*\* Until next week - Peace and Safety!

Please visit the forum and subscribe to this thread by clicking here: <http://epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism>

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Nov 09, 2013 6:51 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 11/9/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-third of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* We end our second week of the new month on a happy note of world reconciliation. Under threat of exile to Siberia to join the incarcerated Pussy Riot protester, one of our own has re-extend the Epicurean hand of Facebook friendship from San Francisco to Thessalonika, and all is well again with the Epicurean world - at least that small part of it that joins us regularly in the Garden of Epicurus facebook group!

In the end it took planting the Greek flag in the Sea of Tranquility to do it, but "all's well that ends well" in the words of the amateur playwright who preferred Stoicism to Epicureanism. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...tal\\_comments=67](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...tal_comments=67)

\*\* And I believe that the group is better for the experience. Most (other than your host for this news update post) had the prudence to stay far away from the line of fire, and at least as of now none have injected any notes of political discord into the photos of Obama and Putin. And the entire episode gave me the chance to inject a long quote from the ancient texts, pointing out that humor in dealing with disagreements has a long pedigree as an Epicurean virtue. No less than Cicero himself records that his Epicurean friend Triarius, defending Epicurus from ridiculous slanders, responded to those slanders "WITH A SMILE": (from On Ends) -- "But Triarius interposed, \*\*with a smile\*\*: "Why, you have practically expelled Epicurus altogether from the philosophic choir. What have you left to him except that, whatever his style may be, you find his meaning intelligible? His doctrines in Natural Philosophy were second-hand, and in your opinion unsound at that; and his attempts to improve on his authority only made things worse. Dialectic he had none. His identification of the Chief Good with pleasure in the first place was in itself an error, and secondly this also was not original; for it had been said before, and said better, by Aristippus. To crown all you added that Epicurus was a person of no education."

\*\*The week did have other interesting discussions as well. Mequa continued with another high-quality blog post, this one on "Winners and Losers" which led to a lengthy discussion, both of which can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...40698169352572/> I believe it is fair to say that the main point of Mequa's blog entry was that Epicureanism rejects the standards of the crowd, and among those standards we should proudly reject is the "rat-race" which ends up dividing those who participate in it into winners and losers. Within that context the application of the "loser" term is easy to understand, but the conversation turned even deeper as we discussed how Epicureanism applies in a world where indeed the number of economic "losers" is growing all the time. I won't belabor the point here, but the discussion points out what Tom accurately (I think) described as difference between the "glass is half empty" vs. glass is half full" attitudes. Epicureanism applies across the board to all situations, so I think it is fair to say that it can have both a calming influence and a strengthening influence, as circumstances and individual choices may lead.

\*\*In other news, we had two poetic entries in the weeks events. In <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...43578542397868/> I posted again on Horace's Book 3, Ode 29, and the famous "Happy the Man" poem which John Dryden derived from this selection by Horace. In another new thread from Tom M. entitled "to my beloved Greek!" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...43558709066518/> we had what I interpret to be a

typically sappy love poem 😊 If anyone gets too carried away with romance after reading that, please refer to closing sections from book IV of Lucretius!! 😊

\*\*Before I get myself in more trouble, that's it for today. Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com) Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

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Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Nov 16, 2013 6:48 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 11/16/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-fourth of a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* We end our third week of November with peace and harmony still reigning in the Facebook group, and a number of the most interesting discussions we have had in a while. Let's take it in order:

\*\*To start the week, Mequa posted a link to an Epicurean-toned blog I had not heard about. Might want to check it out: <http://bacchusandepicurus.blogspot.com/2011/09/daily-...etic-world.html>

\*\*Mequa then posted a good link to a good article on the philosophy of Epicurus at Psychology Today. The article has some flaws but many good points and it's a good one for general circulation. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...45730988849290/>

\*\*Dragan posted a good question about whether we have any artists who would be interested in developing a theme: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...45930208829368/> No responses so far, but this is the kind of question I think about myself as we hopefully work to widen our circle of people who take an active role in promoting Epicurus.

\*\*Now we move into the real "meat" of the week. Elli Pensa posted some lengthy commentary on the tragedy of the failure of modern education to mention Epicurus: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...45809748841414/> The thread quotes a Cavafy poem and make interesting references to Julian the Apostate.

\*\*Next, I posted Epicurus' famous saying "'I know not how I can conceive the good, if I withdraw the pleasures of taste, and withdraw the pleasures of love, and withdraw the pleasures of hearing, and withdraw the pleasurable emotions caused to sight by beautiful form." (Epicurus, from the book "On The End Of Life," translated by Bailey, The Extant Remains)" along with a link to a video of the exquisite Francois Hardy singing "Voila". <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...45806192175103/> That spurred quite a debate about the fleetingness of beauty and romantic love, and led to mention of a former poster here, M. Marulaki, who maintains a very well-written page here: <http://egalitarianrationalcommitmentparadigm.blogspot.com/p/egalitarian-...commitment.html> Through the power of Facebook we re-connected with Marulaki, who seems to be doing well. Our readership on the Facebook pages turns over frequently, so if you were not around to see her posts (over a year ago) on romantic love and other male-female topics, you missed some interesting stuff. Some of Marulaki's ideas are pretty clearly outside the norm for Epicureanism, but many of her ideas are very consistent, and all of her discussion is interesting. If you haven't checked out her page before, you'll find it challenging, to say the least.

\*\*In another of my posts, I responded to a request from Ed Lee for some basic background and links that might be of interest to fans of Ayn Rand who come across Epicurus. I've posted on this at some length in the past, and have now developed quite an extensive new post on the topic. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...46612412094481/> This is a recurring question and if you have comments or suggestions for articles to link to, please add your comment to that thread.

\*\*And continuing for the second week in a row to hold down the spot of "Most Controversial Poster," we have this week's offering from Tom M.: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...44634032292319/> The post is to an talk given in Australia on the topic of using scientific advances to alter human behavior to make people more social. Anyone who brings up topics like this risks getting lumped immediately in with certain groups of Germans from the 1940's, but the issues and the opportunities are real, legitimate, and deserve lots of thought. The discussion under this thread, is excellent, and it prompted Illkka to produce an extensive blog post here directed at part one of the video: <http://menoceus.blogspot.com/2013/11/reacti...e-part-one.html> The video is interesting and well worth watching, and even includes a perceptive audience questioner who asks whether the entire idea is essentially a variation of Platonism. Illkka is planning additional response to part 2

and the QA session, so look for that in the coming days.

\*\* Let me close by getting out my broken record and playing it again. I urge everyone who has any interest in these ideas whatsoever to consider opening your own blog to record your writings for posterity. It is free and easy to do that at <http://www.wordpress.com>, and at that location you can get together a very professional blog in less than an hour (a LOT less than an hour). We have some really good stuff posted here at the Facebook page, but the effort that goes into those posts just zooms away in a matter of hours as one's timeline scrolls by. In fact that is one of the uses of this Weekly Update, to provide an index and way to track back to posts that are worthy of remembering. But this is FAR from ideal. Elli and Maruli have many important things to say on many topics, not the least of which is Romantic Love, and if you aren't interested in that I have a philosophy called "platonism" to sell you. The issues of Educating young people are critical, and I am enough of a dreamer to hope that even our small efforts here on the Facebook page will lead to wider recognition for Epicurean views within our own lifetimes. But that is going to take writing, and recording, and Facebook is not the avenue where all that can be accomplished. Coordinated, inspired, promoted, publicized, but NOT accomplished. All of us need our own blogs (or to add our guest posts on existing blogs) so the search engines at Google and the NSA can allow young people in school and underworked bureaucrats at the NSA to find out about Epicurus' ideas.

\*\*We have an excellent core of writers now, world-wide, who are capable of contributing to a store of knowledge and information about Epicureanism that will one day explode into the open. But we need to get working, and make sure our work can be found!

\*\*As a final thought, here's a good example how we can spread the word. Mequa posted the following on a forum he participates in, and it's an excellent example of how we can have fun and to introduce new people to our favorite philosopher at the same time: <http://forums.avoiceformen.com/showthread.php?tid=7537> For others who post like that, please let me know and I'll include such posts in the weekly update, even if you don't think they are important enough to post separately during the week.

\*\*That's it for today. Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com) Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Nov 23, 2013 7:42 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 11/23/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-fifth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* We end our fourth week of November with peace and harmony somewhat still in force in the Facebook group. Several multiple smileys were necessary to keep the peace between San Francisco and Finland, but between Germany and Greece (Hellas!) a few sparks were flying in a discussion that was fascinating but that I am not qualified to opine upon: childrearing. I will, however, opine anyway:

\*\*Last week was the Twentieth of November, and we had plenty of excellent posting.

\*\*Before moving into the hotter topics of the week, a comment by Maruli that she was reading "A Few Days In Athens" led me to draw up a diagram of the major characters of the book that might be of help to a new reader. I posted a couple of times about it in the Facebook group, but I am still working on the chart, and the best way to access it is going to be through my page at XMIND.net: <http://www.xmind.net/share/CassiusAmicus/> I have to draw a happy medium between enough detail to be helpful without so much detail that the chart becomes overwhelming. If you have suggestions or comments please be sure to let me know.

\*\* In the first huge comment draw of the week, Hiram posted a link to a youtube video bashing Epicureanism in modern culture: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...47778715311184/> Many excellent comments by Keven Brown citing Tertullian, Steve K and others on issues such as when to respond to people who say stupid things, and how. Someone made a comment about religion being a net benefit in America but maybe not in Scandinavia, and much fun ensued, developing into a discussion of the nature of "sin."

\*\* Not too much followup on this post, but I'll still record that I posted a link to an article on "the significance of Cicero" which totally misrepresented Jefferson's views on Cicero on Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...49033821852340/>

\*\*Dragan posted a TED-talk on "fear of death" (a huge topic we don't discuss nearly often enough - it's PD# 2, after all!) and Elli linked in the excellent Liantinis lecture on the topic <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...49133918508997/>

\*\*Hiram followed up with a Twentieth post on a link to an article entitled "Epicureanism and Regret in Modern Culture." <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...49133918508997/> Here a number of sparks flew between SanFranciso and Finland on the subject of American Conservatism (I was surprised to find that anyone in SanFrancisco knew what that was!) but an intensive array of smileys got things calmed down.

\*\*Hmmm here is one I missed - Dragan posted a link to a lecture "Epicurus On Happiness and Death" which I did not get to see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mi7AHxIHVV0>

\*\* In another highly-commented thread, I posted on "What Exactly is pleasure?" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...48022141953508/> We had an excellent discussion on "katastemic" pleasure and "ataraxia." During the course of the conversation I came upon an article that was new to me by a Mr. Wenham from Australia. This article struck me as highly interesting and I strongly recommend this article to anyone interested in the nature of pleasure as Epicurus understood it, as opposed to the way Cicero and later anti-Epicureans explain it to us. Here's the abstract: "The standard interpretation of the concept of katastematic pleasure in Epicurus has it referring to "static" states from which feeling is absent. We owe the prevalence of this interpretation to Cicero's account of Epicureanism in his De Finibus Bonorum Et Malorum. Cicero's account, in turn, is based on the Platonic theory of pleasure. The standard interpretation, when applied to principles of Epicurean hedonism, leads to fundamental contradictions in his theory. I claim that it is not Epicurus, but the standard interpretation that generates these errors because the latter construes pleasure in Epicurus according to an attitudinal theoretical framework, whilst the account of pleasure that emerges from Epicurean epistemology sees it as experiential."

\*\*Reaching back to last week here, but I have to also recommend a fascinating exchange between Elli Pensa and Maruli Marulaki. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...45806192175103/> When Maruli was with us in the past, Elli had not yet joined the group, and so we had a fresh exchange between the two of them on Maruli's strong views on male-female relationships and child-bearing. By my reading of the exchange the two exchanged their very different viewpoints with great bluntness but without harshness or bitterness, so I want to applaud them both. The exchange contained a great amount of detail about Maruli's theories of instinct vs reason as it relates to male-female relationships, with Elli pointing out in response that Nietzsche (who follows Epicurus in some respects) firmly acknowledged the non-rational aspects of male-female relationships. Anyone not familiar with Nietzsche's views on those subjects should check the quotes to which Elli cites. Some fascinating discussion of Epicurus' personal life as compared to that of Rousseau. As I decide what to include here, or whether to include any quotes, I see one that stands out: "Death is the end of life, and when I die, I will at least look back with the contentment, that whatever mistake I may have made, I was wise enough not to have brought the avoidable suffering of breeding upon myself." Wow. If that's not a potent mixture of some Epicureanism and something else, I don't know what is! Although I agree with Elli's comments, I am sympathetic with the intensity and earnestness of Maruli's views, and as I too am someone who has no children, I am sympathetic with her viewpoint. But in the end Elli's views I think are

more consistent with the Epicurean record, and she states them beautifully. I urge anyone interested in thinking about male-female relationships from an Epicurean point of view to read the thread.

\*\*That's it for today. Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Nov 30, 2013 9:29 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 11/30/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-sixth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* With the Thanksgiving Holiday here in the US I have come perilously close to forgetting the weekly update, but the chain remains unbroken. We've had plenty of posting over the last week, so I'll just hit the highlights, taking it in order:

\*\*In the first of several posts about articles on the internet with strained interpretations of Epicureanism, Mequa pointed me to this one which lead to a list of common issues: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...51096761646046/>

\*\*Mequa also posted a link to an "Epicurean Liturgy" on youtube prepared by someone I gather is a Unitarian priest. I'm not a "liturgy" kind of person, but this was pretty well done.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...51096761646046/>

\*\* Good quote from Mark Cubbedge citing Robert Ingersoll that's worth repeating: "so that so far as I am concerned I am immortal; that is to say, I cannot recollect when I did not exist, and there never will be a time when I shall remember that I do not exist." - Robert G Ingersoll  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...51739741581748/>

\*\*Our long-running thread on love, male-female relationships, and childlessness apparently has run its course, but not without a few more intense posts here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...45806192175103/>

\*\*This is one I missed til doing the update, a Tom M. post on showing resilience in the face of adversity <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...52503294838726/>

\*\*That was followed by another off-the-wall interpretation of Epicureanism, this one called "The Hobo Test" which prompted lengthy discussion:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...51474621608260/>

\*\*Followed quickly by Mequa's link to the "Epicurean Humanist Church", which is nothing if not eclectic, as its newsletter features the bust of Zeno the Stoic at the top!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...52659968156392/>

\*\*As the week moved on and our US vacation began, I was able to finish reading R.D. Hicks' "Stoics and Epicureans", which led to a number of posts. First off was "The Error of Seeing Epicurean Pleasure Through Stoic Eyes"  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...52953588127030/>

\*\*Mequa posted an interesting link about Romantic Love from an existentialist philosopher <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...53158414773214/> and also a quote worth repeating here ""Life should be about pleasure, not an endurance test everyday where all that matters is survival of the fittest and a tightening of the bootstraps." - Tim Pylypiuk  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...53156034773452/>

\*\*Then came another in a series of posts by me about the nature of pleasure  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...51557254933330/>

\*\*And another one I missed, Tom's link to a UK Daily Mail (we cite to the UK often, I notice) article entitled "Does Praying Make One Stronger?" Best comment in response goes to our female friend in Thessalonika! "To pray to a god that is not caring at all about your matters is almost like to have a picture of an eunuch man to make love with a woman in bed"  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...53709938051395/>

And then two posts that proved I had too much free time this weekend. The first on PANSPERMIA <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...53622678060121/> (which is actually

an interesting theory of transmission of life throughout the universe as Epicurus held was the case) and link to a UK Daily Mail (once again!) article about a geneticist who follows "saltation" theory (that evolution proceeds in jumps rather than gradually) and holds that humans are the result of hybridizing pigs and chimpanzees!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...54025884686467/>

\*\*In between the fringe science posts I had time for two of more substance. The first was "Brutus v Cassius, Stoic v Epicurean" which contrasted the views of the two leading conspirators against Julius Caesar  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...53577898064599/>

\*\*The second was "Is That All There Is" - The Sad Ending of RD Hicks' "Stoics and Epicureans."  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...53999011355821/> Both of these last two were written to preserve my findings on reading Hicks' well-known and influential book on "Stoics and Epicureans"

\*\* The top comment-getter for the week was no doubt Elli Pensa's "Epicurean Philosophy or Epicureanism", which set out the beginning of an essay by Dimitris Alta about Epicurean views and modern politics. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...52406301515092/> This one contained excellent discussion about systems and ideologies with interesting references to Nietzsche and Dimitis Liantinis. The name of Liantinis comes up pretty frequently in our discussions, and I hope our non-Greek readers, who are probably less familiar with him, will check him out. That has been kind of hard to do, as his work was published in Greek, but Elli has translated a few selections for us in the past, and Liantinis' last book "Gemma" has now - this year - been translated into English and is available on Amazon.com. <http://www.amazon.com/Gemma-Dimitris...k/dp/B00EFET8PA> I have purchased a copy and started reading it, and it's very good. I'm sure there is much I cannot predict, but I am immediately attracted by his Nietzschean views of the conflict between "Athens and Jerusalem" and the loss of Hellenistic culture to (let's call it) "foreign religions." Liantinis has another book in particular that looks really interesting "Stoa and Rome" and I hope that and others will be translated. This is a lengthy thread but one well worth reading.

With that I will close for the holiday weekend. If I missed any other posts I apologize to the posters.

\*\*Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Dec 14, 2013 6:09 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 12/07/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-seventh in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* This has been a moderately active week, with some interesting posts I think. Before getting into that, let me say that over the last several weeks I have been attempting to broaden my background in the philosophers that preceded (and followed) Epicurus by studying Diogenes Laertius. Of course book ten is of particular interest, but I am finding much fascinating material in the philosophers that preceded Epicurus. I know that much of Epicureanism is a rejection of Platonism, but of course it helps to have a broader understanding of what areas were in general agreement between the schools, and where the differences were. A good full copy of the entire book is available on wikipedia here: [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives\\_of\\_...nt\\_Philosophers](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives_of_...nt_Philosophers) I enjoy listening to this on a text-to-speech engine as an MP3, and I have converted book ten on Epicurus and uploaded it here, if anyone would like it for their own use. <https://db.tt/df043hfs> Of course book ten is key, but I find the earlier books on the other philosophers almost equally interesting. Diogenes Laertius fills them with quips and anecdotes about each of the philosophers, and he is very entertaining.

\*\*In one other general research note, I have long been looking - without success - for an English version of Pierre Gassendi's work on Epicurus. Based on the information on the page linked here <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/rst/s...hermanson.html> , it appears that an English translation DOES exist, in the work of Englishman Thomas Stanley which he "incorporated into the third volume of Stanley's The History of Philosophy, in 1660." So far I have not been able to locate that online, and it appears to be very hard to find. There is a version entitled "In Eight Parts" online, but that appears to be an abbreviation. I will launch a search for this "Volume Three" and certainly let you know if I can find it. Gassendi is credited with being one of the most important influences in re-kindling interest in Epicurus in Europe, and his views would be very interesting to read. If anyone reading this has a source for this volume three, please let me

know!

\*\*The week started with a post from Hiram with links to a discussion of living and working in the modern world. As Hiram wrote, "A people's philosophy should not only concern itself with high work ethic, as important as it may be. It must recognize the need for leisure without promoting a lazy attitude. Considering that PEOPLE, not things, provide us with the most value and happiness ... and always understanding the difference between subjects (people) and objects (things, and never the other way around) -- What does our philosophy say of the creation of value and of productivity?" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...54449334644122/> and <http://societyofepicurus.com/how-we-might-live/>

\*\*Next, Steve at TurtlesAllTheWayDown <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/2013/12/01/epicureanism-and-diet/> posted on "Epicureanism and Diet" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...54460117976377/> This post commented on how many fans of Epicurus seem to share a triple set of interests: (1) Epicureanism (2) freethought and (3) ancestral diet. I know I share these same interests, and as I see it one part of the common link is rejection of the consensus of the majority in these very important areas of life.

\*\*Then, Elli posted the first part of "Sufficiency and Financial Crisis, by Dimitris Altas" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...54358697986519/> I hope we'll eventually get the entire article, and that over time more of the friends of Epicurus in Greece will share their thoughts with us.

\*\*In one of the more unique posts of the week, Mark C. linked to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...55134391242283/> I have heard of, but unfortunately don't know enough to comment about "The Big Lebowski," but Mark has contributed a chapter to "Lebowski 101: Limber-Minded Investigations into the Greatest Story Ever Blathered" in which he says he makes reference to Epicurus. Good work, Mark.

\*\*Next, Mequa found and posted a link to a scholarly article entitled "I spit Upon the Noble, The Epicurean Critique of Love of Honor and the Origins of Modernity ....." <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...55201381235584/> I didn't get to finish the article but it is very well written.

\*\*I won't bore you with details of my posts this week other than to first list them: "Epicurus: Against Skepticism" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...54861024602953/> , The True Nature of Pleasure: Norman DeWitt's analysis of pleasure; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...56081754480880/> and "The Baseline State: Happy to Be Alive" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...56289481126774/> and "Was Ancient Epicureanism A Suicide Club?" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...55618637860525/> . Each of these was targeted toward my interest in getting greater precision in discussing the nature of pleasure and how it fits into Epicureanism. I apologize to anyone who finds this subject tedious, but given that [pleasure is the guide of life](#) in Epicureanism, it is important for us to become as familiar with the nature and habits of this guide as possible!

\*\*Hiram found a good page on a French philosopher with views that look interesting. Check out Julia De Funes at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...54464254642630/>

\*\*Also around midweek, Mark posted a good quote from Robert Ingersoll "Our hope of immortality does not come from any religions, but nearly all religions come from that hope." Ingersoll had been mentioned by Steve earlier, and that gave us an opportunity to mention both Ingersoll and a similar figure from the same period, Lysander Spooner. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...55551974533858/>

\*\*And then last but not least Hiram posted an interesting link about "Epicurean Contractarianism" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...56147501140972/> which was a lengthy paper by John Thrasher entitled "Reconciling Justice and Pleasure in Epicurean Contractarianism." Here is his abstract: "Epicurean contractarianism is an attempt to reconcile individualistic hedonism with a robust account of justice. The pursuit of pleasure and the requirements of justice, however, have seemed to be incompatible to many commentators, both ancient and modern. It is not clear how it is possible to reconcile hedonism with the demands of justice. Furthermore, it is not clear why, even if Epicurean contractarianism is possible, it would be necessary for Epicureans to endorse a social contract. I argue here that Epicurean contractarianism is both possible and necessary once we understand Epicurean practical rationality in a new way. We are left with an appealing version of teleological, individualistic contractarianism that is significantly different from Hobbesian contractarianism."

\*\*All in all a very productive week, I think. In closing, keep in mind these words from the letter to Menoecus, which certainly apply to all our discussions and interactions with each other: "Exercise yourself in these and related precepts day and night, both by yourself and with one who is like-minded; then never, either in waking or in dream, will you be disturbed, but will live as a god among men. For man loses all semblance of mortality by living in the midst of immortal blessings."

\*\*Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Dec 14, 2013 6:09 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 12/14/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-seventh in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* This has been an active week, and started with the location and posting of a document which had to date eluded the Google Books engine, and had been next-to-impossible to find. Pierre Gassendi, who lived 1592-1655 (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre\\_Gassendi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Gassendi) ), published a "Life and Morals of Epicurus" and a "Syntagma of Epicurus" that are generally recognized as milestone in the transmission of Epicurean ideas to the modern world. A number of Latin editions are available on the internet, including here <http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/CadresFenetre?...25465&l=6&M=tdm> . These are of limited use to those who do not know Latin, but in the late 1600's large sections of Gassendi's works were translated into English and published in Thomas Stanley's "History of Philosophy." An abridged version of that document is available at Google, but the main Epicurean section is contained in Volume Three of the unabridged edition, and that has been difficult to find. Last week I was able to get to a major library and access the British Museum's collection of early English books, and there I was able to download the prized English-language target. I have posted a copy for free public reference and download here: <https://archive.org/details/Stanle...curusByGassendi>

\*\*I am almost has happy to report that several of us here in the Garden of Epicurus have already devoted significant effort to transcribing a copy of the PDF into digital form. The PDF cannot be productively read by OCR, as the Stanley edition employs not only many archaic spellings, but also the figure of the "italic-f" rather than the moden "s" character. Special thanks go to Ilkka and Brian so far in their help in transcription. We have a public Google document set up for joint editing purposes, and anyone who wishes to help is invited to email one of us and participate. We will make the text available publicly and freely when the work gets further along.

\*\*If you are not familiar with Gassendi and his role in Epicureanism, this PDF which is available now is already a gem. It had been my understanding that Gassendi had prepared a "normal" commentary, with much criticism and interpretation from his Christian perspective. No doubt he did that as well, but the part of the text preserved here is written in a much different style -- as if Gassendi were writing as a full Epicurean himself, explaining the doctrine with sympathy, with ability, and without condescending editorial corrections. Of course, even the text as presented

here has to be understood to be Gassendi's interpretation, and it does not possess the authority of an ancient author who had access to the original texts. In fact, it is possible that we today have access to more texts than did Gassendi, as we have access to Herculaneum documents, Vatican papers, and the wall at Oinoianda that were probably not available to Gassendi. Even the engraving of the picture of Epicurus does not reflect the true face of Epicurus as we know it today from the busts at Herculaneum.

\*\*Nevertheless, Gassendi lived in an age when fluency in classical Latin and Greek was likely still employed to an art form higher than we have it today. That means Gassendi's translations of Lucretius and Diogenes Laertius are entitled to great respect, while still keeping in mind that the conclusions he drew, especially about complicated philosophical ideas, are not necessarily more correct than we can draw ourselves. Gassendi seems likely to see more clearly than we do some finer points of language, and I note the he translates as section of Diogenes Laertius, in regard to "rolling" to see his friends if they did not come to him first, in a way that seem to have eluded more modern translators, who see odd phrasing such as "hop, skip, and jump" where the context supports Gassendi as being closer to the probable meaning. I also note that Gassendi maintains that it is an error to conclude, as do some, that the gods live in the intermundine spaces. I'm sure will pick up much more of interest as we proceed. I hope you find access to this work helpful, and that you'll post in the Garden of Epicurus board any material you find to be of particular interest.

\*\*In other news, first, Tom M posted a link to a social networking app that has potential for those of us who would like to cultivate more friends in our local neighborhoods. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...57599644329091/> Tom says he uses and likes this app.

\*\* The posting of the Gassendi material was announced in this thread: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...57912827631106/> It prompted much discussion in the comments you might well find interesting.

\*\*That chain included the first of a number of interesting posts by Mary Stamatiadou, Professor of Medical Biophysics, an Hon. Director of research at the National Research Center for Natural Sciences «Demokritos» in Athens, Greece, as well as a member of New York Academy of Sciences. Elli tells us in this thread <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...58721024216953/> that she has published a book (in Greek) entitled "The Epikourian logic in Quantum Theory". Mary states she is preparing an English translation to which I greatly look forward. We are lucky to have her participate at all in our group, and I hope she will participate much more.

\*\* In another post that prompted detained comments, Brian posted a diagram illustrating Epicurean epistemology. I won't bore you with details of that discussion, but it was one of the deeper ones of the week and worth looking over. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...58721024216953/>

\*\*Steve Klesner then posted a passage that contrasted Stoic and Epicurean personality types. This prompted some edgy commentary about whether personality types exist at all, and if so how they relate to philosophy. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...59188244170231/>

\*\* A quick question on the meaning of the name Epicurus turned into a long thread with detailed information from Elli, including her jousting with a follower of th Greek Minister of Health. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...59105567511832/> This was also the week of Elli's birthday, for which we should wish her a happy one, and express our regret that she got into a relatively minor car accident! One thing we know, the accident was not "Fate!"

\*\*Last of all this week, Hiram reports on progress with his book-writing, and asks a question about Candide: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...60788620676860/>

We are beginning to close in on the end-of-the-year holiday season, at which time I of course wish everyone an extra helping of pleasure along with the standard Peace and Safety!

\*\*Let's end with a word of wisdom from our friend Mequa - Quote for today: "Give up on all hope of a better past." <https://www.facebook.com/Mequa/posts/10151851215686295>

\*\*Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Dec 21, 2013 7:40 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 12/21/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-eighth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and

easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* First, I hope everyone had a happy 20th yesterday. This has been an active week on the Facebook Garden of Epicurus group, so there is a lot to cover. Before diving in, I hope our friends will use any extra time they might find over the holiday season to say hello in the group and let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions for the coming year. This is a good time to take stock of where we've been and where we might like to go, so if anyone has comments or suggestions feel free to add them to this Weekly update thread, or start your own.

\*\*The first post of the week was Steve Klesner's followup article "Synthesizing Epicurean Ethics with an Ancestral Diet; Implications for Vegetarianism" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...61237357298653/> This was an excellent article that did not generate a lot of comment, perhaps because it came at a bad time of the week. Steve covered a lot of ground in this article and it definitely deserves consideration. Also, in the time since I've read this I see that there are several passages in the Stanley/Gassendi book that deal with vegetarianism, particularly on page 244. Gassendi cites Porphyry in these sections, and I am not sure from my own studies whether to conclude that this is Epicureanism or some other influence, but regardless of that, this is the most detailed treatment of vegetarianism I have seen in a book focused on Epicurus. For some reason the "read-online" version of Gassendi is not working, but the book can be downloaded at <https://archive.org/details/Stanle...curusByGassendi> if you'd like to check the reference.

\*\*In a good use of the Garden's resources Hiram posted a question about "Candide" by Voltaire. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...60788620676860/> It's been too long since college for me to remember what that was about, but several posted helpful comments on how Voltaire relates to Epicureanism. This is an excellent use of the forum and I hope people will use it that way often. There's little doubt in my mind but that this is the way that day to day life would have worked in the original Garden, and Epicurus and Metrodorus and Hermarchus and Colotes and others traded information for their respective contributions to the Epicurean corpus.

\*\*This week also Elli posted two slides with quotes from Dimitri Liantinis' book "Rome and the Stoa". The two are <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63064690449253/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...64196733669382/> If you're not familiar with Liantinis, he was a colorful and insightful Greek philosophy professor who was influenced by Nietzsche and was a champion of the ancient Hellenistic worldview. Large portions of his final work GEMMA can be read in English at the Amazon preview here: <http://www.amazon.com/Gemma-Dimitris...k/dp/B00EFET8PA> "Rome and the Stoa" sounds particularly relevant to our Epicurean interests, but unfortunately we English-speakers are limited to what Elli translates for us. Thanks Elli!

\*\*The Gassendi book is proving to be a fruitful source of material, and one thing I came across was a section that contains a version of Epicurus' riddle. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...62672677155121/> This is usually stated in the

form "Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Then whence cometh evil? Is he neither able nor willing? Then why call him God?" and is attributed to Epicurus, but does not appear in any of his writings. The post discusses the way this comes down to us through Lactantius and Gassendi and Hume.

\*\*In one of the posts that generated lots of discussion, Brian posted a diagram on the process of perception. You need to see the diagram to follow the discussion, and it appears here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...62219043867151/>

\*\* On the Twentieth itself I marked the occasion with another Gassendi excerpt, this one on "felicity." Part of it is here: "Let us therefore endeavour so to live that we may not repent of the time past; and so enjoy the present, as if the morrow nothing concerned us. He most sweetly attains the morrow who least needs or desires the morrow; and that hour overtakes a man most welcome, whereof he had framed to himself the least hope. And since it is troublesome always to begin life, let life be always to us as it were perfect and absolute, and as if there wanted nothing to its measure. The life of a fool is unpleasant, it is timorous, it is wholly carried on in the future; let us endeavor that ours be pleasant, secure, not only present, but even now settled in safety." The rest is here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63482707074118/>

\*\*Steve also posted a South Park video entitled "Dead Dead Dead" which is intended as parody, but as Steve says is "absurdly Epicurean." I didn't check it out immediately, but now that I've heard it, it strikes me, like Steve, as intriguingly close to a brilliant statement of Epicureanism. In a better (Epicurean) world, children would be brought up to understand death from an early age, and not to consider it with horror or anything other than natural. With slight tweaking (or maybe as is!) this makes an excellent Epicurean lesson. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63507080405014/>

\*\*Also in the music department (but on a somewhat cheerier theme) Elli posted a song "dedicated to all my epicurean friends, since with their orthological and scientific thought, for 2500 years now and then, they create BRIDGES for the humanity to understand the nature of all the things." <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63547990400923/>

\*\*And again another from Gassendi: "[T]his constitution of ours is not a meer stupidity, but rather a state wherein all actions of life are performed pleasantly and sweetly. For, as we would not have the life of a wise man to be like a torrent or rapid stream, so we would not it should be like a standing dead-pool: but rather like a river gliding on silently and quietly. We therefore hold his pleasure is \*\*not unactive, but that which reason makes firm to him.\*\*" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63495320406190/>

\*\*And again another from Gassendi: "For it behooves [every man] to live in a civil society, neither as a Lion, nor as a Gnat, lest, resembling the one, he be cast out; the other, caught in a snare." <http://newepicurean.com/live-neither-a...-nor-as-a-gnat/>

\*\*In news from outside the Garden, the BBC did an in-depth update of the state of investigation in the Herculaneum scrolls: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63527390402983/>

\*\*In one of the more thought-provoking slides (memes they call it?) of the week, Mequa cross-posted one from the Stoics that's basically a slam on Epicureanism, indicating that an Epicurean Superman would be worthless. Lots of discussion which I hope is not yet over, because this is a key issue which has been controversial and used as a slam against Epicureans since the beginning. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63813333707722/>

\*\*Late in the week, Tim Fogle and Richard Farley posted about their new Autarchy initiative. I think it's best for me not to get too deep in political discussions, because we have fans of Epicurus from across the political spectrum, and my own interests lead me to conclude that politics is so fact-specific to the group of individuals concerned that it's best left to separate discussion. But this thread is highly interesting, and if you are at all interested in Autarchy and/or how it relates to Epicurean ideas, check it out. I certainly wish Tim and Richard well in their project. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...63529760402746/>

\*\*This has happily been a long update, so I will bring it to a close. At this time of year I wish everyone an extra helping of pleasure along with the standard Peace and Safety! Remember, this is a tough time of year for a lot of people, with short days, long nights (except for our friends in Australia!) but most of all because the Christmas season brings to the forefront lots of sad emotions and unfulfilled hopes. This is a good time to remember both for ourselves and for others Doctrine 27: "Of all the means which wisdom acquires to ensure happiness throughout the whole of life, by far the most important is friendship." I hope you'll take the time to say hello at the forum, and perhaps even invite others to participate. For me at least -- and I think for most all of us who value Epicurus -- the calculation is simply and strictly in accord with [PD27](#). We have no desire to take over the world or meddle in anyone else's affairs. We simply know that good friendship is \*by far\* the most important means of acquiring happiness, and it behooves us all to have as many true friends as possible. And what better ground is there from which true friendship can grow than through a common study of Nature through Epicurus. Whether or not we reach the state where we feel justified in considering ourselves "gods among men," communicating with other fans of Epicurus is a worthy endeavor.

\*\*Have a good week, and if I missed anything, please be sure to let me know by commenting here, on private message on facebook, or emailing [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Dec 28, 2013 8:58 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 12/28/2013\*\*\*

\*\*This is the twenty-ninth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* As this is the last of these updates for the year, I want to take a few lines to make you aware of my plans for new initiatives for 2014.

\*\* First, good progress is being made on transcribing the Gassendi Synopsis of Epicureanism, and the work should be completed in the first part of 2014. While this may seem ho-hum, what it means is that the modern English-speaking world will have ready access to its first "new" piece of explicit pro-Epicurean literature in over a hundred years. This work by Gassendi is not a standard academic paper droning on endlessly about possibilities and issues and alternatives. It is a full-throated statement of Epicureanism, written as if by an ancient Epicurean, with no apologies. We have to remember that Gassendi probably did not have access to the ancient texts any more than do we, and in some cases (Herculaneum, Vatican Sayings) he probably had fewer texts. Nevertheless, Gassendi was fluent in the original languages, and his interpretations of Diogenes Laertius and others sources is probably better than we recreate today. His opinions are entitled to great respect, but we should always reserve the right to be critical (as I am in accepting a number of views of Dewitt rather than those of Gassendi). Regardless of that, this is going to be a tremendous resource for those who want to hear Epicureanism presented in Epicurean terms.

\*\* Second, (and these next items are still more in the planning stage) I will be working on a response to a list of "common objections to Epicureanism." This list is based on a lecture given by a philosophy professor who analyzed and criticized Epicurus from the point of view of Aristotelian philosophy. It includes some of the most powerful objections to Epicurus that have been repeated for thousands of years, and it is important to have a ready reference for them. A summary of the list is here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...64692006953188/>

\*\* Third, and related to item two, is a project to prepare a chart of the major philosophical questions showing where Epicurus fits in contrast to other philosophers. Here I am referring to

the big questions such as 1. How do we know what we know? 2. What is the nature of the universe? and 3. How should men live? Much work has already been done with the roadmap from "A Few Days in Athens" <http://newepicurean.com/a-map-view-of-...ld-of-epicurus/> but this project will be aimed at producing a chart for general purpose use.

**\*\*Fourth**, I will be preparing a reading list "curriculum" for those who want to help educate young people not only on the philosophy of Epicurus specifically, but on Greco-Roman civilization particularly. This project is still in the planning stages, but for those who wish a reading list now, a good one is included in the English translation of Dimitri Liantinis' GEMMA available here: <http://www.amazon.com/Gemma-Dimitris...k/dp/B00EFET8PA>

**\*\*Fifth**, it appears that a productive way of getting Epicurean ideas in front of new eyes is through the use of graphic memes for sharing on social media sites. I prepared a prototype of one here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151924835729005&set=a.381781194004.167645.227256659>  
In the coming weeks I will be setting up a special website section devoted to the production of more of these, with not only easy access to each graphic, but also easy access to the raw materials to make new ones quickly and easily.

**\*\*Sixth**, I will also be setting up a special website section devoted to recovering and transcribing other "lost" pro-Epicurean works in addition to those of Gassendi and Frances Wright, which are now (or will soon) be available. For example, there are numerous other significant English, French, and Italian writers (such as Walter Charleton) whose works are virtually inaccessible. These men were important in the transmission of Epicurean ideas to the modern world, so we can hope to find much interesting material as we unearth their works in Google Books and other online (and physical) libraries.

**\*\*Seventh**, it is long past time for a new "Introduction to Epicureanism" youtube video which focuses on the core ideas. There are a number of good ones already, but many tend to focus on the more superficial ideas (such as "living simply") rather than on the philosophy which justifies them. This situation will be fixed!

**\*\*Eighth**, last, and not at all least, I am about to launch a new "Forum of the Lucretians" for the hard-core students of Epicurus who want to share materials and discussions in private, and under full private control, rather than solely through our "friends" at Facebook. This will **\*\*NOT\*\*** be an attempt to replace anyone's participation in the Facebook forums or any other forums. Instead, this will allow me (and anyone who is interested) to pursue a more "layered" approach to our online time. The current "Garden of Epicurus" facebook page is totally open for anyone to see, and we do not even have an administrator to perform the most basic of functions now that Jaako Wallenius is gone. Hopefully that will change, but regardless of whether it does or not, Facebook is a notoriously fickle master. The "open" nature of facebook can be a chill on speaking freely, and the structure of the site makes it very difficult to retrieve information once it has scrolled into the past. The Forum of the Lucretians will be a traditional "Simple Machines" based forum. This will allow much greater control over attachments and

organization, and it will allow permalinks to important posts, with fine-grain control over the way all the services function. We are going to need a "shake-down cruise" period to get this going and tune the forum rules, but over time I think this will be a valuable addition to the mix of offerings available to fans of Epicurus. The facebook pages will continue to serve their function as open discussion and a good way for attracting new friends, but as people get more interested and want to talk more securely and access our resources, this forum will be better suited. If you are interested in participating, please email me, or check out the prototype here: <http://newepicurean.com/forum/index.php> Currently the forum is not quite open, but anyone is welcome to let me know they are interested in participating when it does open. The forum should be set to receive registrations, but we'll hold the actual opening of the forum in abeyance until it's ready to go. If you are interested in this but are someone who is not a regular at the Garden of Epicurus facebook page, please look me (Cassius Amicus) up there (or email me) and let me know who you are and your background of interest in participating. Remember, this is for those who are already sincere in their interest in pursuing the study of Epicurus. There is no oath of allegiance here or any secret ceremonies, but the goal is to keep the elementary discussions on the facebook page, and just move the indepth stuff to a more secure location.

Ok, now turning back to the last full week of the year:

\*\*Tom followed up on prior discussions about self-help associations with a comment on how they worked in the past in America and a related article : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...64331006989288/>

\*\* I posted the first of a series of Gassendi excerpt on beneficence toward others: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...64890516933337/>

\*\*Hiram posted an excellent Christmas-eve message on "Why Materialism Matters" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...65766226845766/>

\*\*.... followed by my own "A Happy Holidays to us all!" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...65782380177484/>

\*\*Mequa produced an interesting summary of core Epicurean ideas: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...66506073438448/>

\*\*We had a highly intellectual discussion of Greek yogurt <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...64232320332490/>

\*\*Mequa followed up his earlier post with "A NeoEpicurean Standard of Value" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...66801443408911/>

\*\*I posted the Descartes v Jefferson meme mentioned above <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...66171100138612/>

\*\*And in the lengthiest thread of the week, Tom posted to an article on a scientific study of pleasure, which ended (as of the moment) appropriately enough in a marriage proposal!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...66457866776602/>

\*\*I thank all who have interacted with me personally this year, and wish all of you the best for a peaceful and safe 2014!

Remember this from Epicurus: "Laugh while you philosophize, take care of your property, do your duty to your family, and never cease to proclaim the tenets of the true philosophy!"

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jan 04, 2014 10:04 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 1/4/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the thirtieth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* Between the end of the holiday season and the cold weather in the United States, this update will unfortunately be fairly brief. In last week's update I recounted a number of goals for 2014, and I am happy to say we have some new goals to add.

\*\*First, Hiram has announced the beginning of a monthly newsletter from the Society of Epicurus. Please check in with this link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...71202996302089/> to let Hiram know your email address so he can add you to the list. I have promised to help with articles, and we of course welcome other contributors. But the first step is to let Hiram know your email address to be sure you get the newsletter.

\*\*Second, I have completed initial setup of a domain/website devoted exclusively to Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens." I want to repeat my appreciation to Ed Lee for finding this book and pointing it out to me, as it received very little mention in the standard sources on Epicurus, and yet it is a very good introduction to Epicureanism that is almost certainly one-of-a-kind. If you haven't read this work yet, it is now easily accessible at <http://www.AFewDaysInAthens.com>

\*\*Third, I prepared a second "meme" this week, this one comparing Epicurus' view on "the flux" to that of Heraclitus. That meme is featured here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...69368296485559/>

\*\*Fourth, as part of launching a second meme, I have launched <http://www.EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com>. The purpose of this website is simply to serve as a jumping-off point so that the memes can list a single address where the curious can find links to all the major Epicurean websites across the world. The hope is here that memes or other mentions of Epicureanism can conveniently cite to a single place without worrying about slighting or showing preference of one over another. If you have a site that you think should be added please email me and we'll get it up there as quickly as possible.

\*\*In conversations this week Tom Merle posted a link to an article on Epigenetics: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...69368296485559/>

\*\*Dragan posted a link to one of the best BBC talk show discussions of Epicurus on the internet, featuring several recognized scholars on Epicureanism. This one is a high quality program you don't want to miss. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...68294766592912/>

\*\*Tom also posted some end-of-year ruminations on living happily during deteriorating economic times. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...69575326464856/>

\*\*And in the lead discussion-generator of the week, Elli posted a selection from Dimitri Liantinis regarding the difference between machines and men. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...68684589887263/>

\*\*Just today Tom has posted a link to a discussion from "Modern Day Philosophers" about Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...71593816263007/> Haven't had a chance to listen yet.

\*\*And the "Defender of Epicurus" award for the week goes to Mequa for standing up against a Stoic criticism here <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...71130409642681/> We'll cite

just the last part from Mequa here, but the whole post is worthwhile: "I maintain with Thomas Jefferson that Stoic morality often contains an amount of "hypocrisy and grimace". The real meaning of hypocrisy being "play-acting". By publicly stating a commitment to virtue at all costs, the Stoic is making himself or herself look good, and simultaneously making others look bad for not professing the same values - which raises his social status by upping himself and downing others. Note that the effect of this is independent of sincere practice, and even sincerely believing that one is committed to virtue at all costs can easily be a means of self-deception, as a tactic to deceive others in a social power play. The potential for exploitation of this as a hypocritical act cannot be understated. This is not found in Epicureanism."

\*\*As the new year gets off to a busy start, Remember this from Epicurus: "Laugh while you philosophize, take care of your property, do your duty to your family, and never cease to proclaim the tenets of the true philosophy!"

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jan 11, 2014 7:25 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 1/11/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the thirty-first in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* On this first full week of the new year, I'd like to focus on a promising development in England. Mequa has set up a "Meetup" group in the Bristol area of England, and it's been interesting to watch the reaction. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) We've previously seen meetup initiatives in Chicago and the Atlantic Coast, but the results have

been mixed, and none have been as successful as the group in Australia. (The groups in Greece are a special case, and don't - I gather - use Meetup.com.) Mequa has set up what appears to be a very good group home page, <http://www.meetup.com/Epicurus-inspi...cal-Philosophy/> and I see that of tonight ten people have signed up to show their interest. As Mequa proceeds, and as others (including me) consider setting up similar groups, it's probably helpful to look to the example of the longest-lasting group, the one in Sydney Australia <http://www.meetup.com/Sydney-Epicurus-Philosophy-Garden/> Wow I did not realize that they had SIXTY-FIVE people listed as interested on the site. The site lists TWENTY-TWO past meetings, and it looks like general attendance is between seven and fifteen people, which is excellent. I see they are making active use of the Message Board facility at Meetup.com, and I think it is excellent that they are using that to distribute the agenda / topic of conversation: in this case, a discussion on a post by Mequa (referenced below) on applying Epicurean ideas in a modern context. <http://www.meetup.com/Sydney-Epicuru...ents/158935272/>

Geoff Petersson has put a lot of work into this project, and anyone considering working with Meetup.com would be well served to review how Geoff has made it work. I'm curious as to whether Geoff also runs a facebook page or keeps it separate, and I'll figure that out and report back.

\*\*I'm not clear on whether they are using Meetup.com, but I see there is also an upcoming Nordic European Epicurean Meetup coming up in January: [https://www.facebook.com/events/2412875...ry\\_type=regular](https://www.facebook.com/events/2412875...ry_type=regular) and <https://plus.google.com/photos/1039103...860300305594369> Meetup.com can get a little expensive, and it may be that it makes sense to start with Meetup.com and then migrate to a free resource after that. I think Hiram and Mark C. ran into similar issues in the past.

\*\* We'll be watching Mequa's progress and report back with tips and experiences from this project.

\*\* For the "post report" we had a couple that generated significant discussion. Mequa posted an excerpt from Luke Slattery's "Reclaiming Epicurus" where Slattery indicated "Epicureanism 'must be detached from their antiquated cosmological and mythical elements, so that their fundamental positions, which the schools themselves considered essential, can be brought out.'" Anyone reading De Rerum Natura knows that it includes many specific references to ancient myths and legends that no doubt lent great clarity to the material two thousand years ago, but which are now lost in obscurity. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* If you're not referring to the sixteenth century painting of Heraclitus contrasted against Democritus by Johannes Moreelse (as I was not) take a look at my post here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*I want to make special mention of two posts by Ioannis Apostolopoulos, [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2) and [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2) but I'll have to defer further

comment til I learn Greek.

\*\*Also, Steve Ko. posted a link to a Psychology Today article that bears out how friendship starting in self-interest creates such a bond that the interests of the two people seem to merge.  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* And in a post I missed myself, Brian posted on particle convergence  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And in the post with the most comments this week, and being honored with the topic of the month for the Australian Meetup Group, you'll definitely want to check Mequa's post on what ways, if any, the \*\*ethics\*\* of Epicureanism would need to be modified to fit into a modern scientific naturalistic worldview. ("Ethics" in this sense being the classical sense of "the art of living" or "the good life".) This one revolves to significant degree around the issue of "free will" which is always good for generating discussion. For anyone interested in reading a scholarly article (this by David Sedly) on Epicurus' fight against determinism, feel free to download this pdf entitled "Epicurus' Refutation of Determinism" here: <https://db.tt/BN0PXD3P> [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Also be sure to be on the lookout for the first edition of Hiram's new monthly newsletter from the Society of Epicurus. If you have not done so already, please check in with this link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...71202996302089/> to let Hiram know your email address so he can add you to the list.

\*\*Also in upcoming events, keep in mind that the 4th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy will take place at the Cultural Center of Pallini, Athens on February 15 and 16. Once again this year I am unable to attend, but you can find details here: <http://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm> and we have good reason to hope that significant excerpts from the conference will be made available to us on Youtube. It is my understanding that Elli P. is taking over administration of the Thessaloniki Epicurean website, and so we also have reason to hope for tighter communication between those of us outside Greece and those in "the homeland" of our favorite philosopher.

\*\*That's all for this week. As we continue into the new year let's stay for the moment with this thought from Epicurus: "Laugh while you philosophize, take care of your property, do your duty to your family, and never cease to proclaim the tenets of the true philosophy!"

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

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Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jan 18, 2014 8:37 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 1/18/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the thirty-second in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made.

\*\* To start this week, here's a quick update on Mequa's new Meetup group in the Bristol, England, area. After the page has been online for less than two weeks, it already has twelve people indicating interest, and two have indicated that they will join Mequa for a preliminary organization meeting this coming week. The first meeting is set for Tuesday evening, so we'll follow what happens and report back next week.  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* In other events for this past week, Hiram released the first of his "HappyTwentieth" newsletters. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2) Acute readers will note that the 20th of January has not yet occurred, and this fooled me into thinking I had more time to write an article. Hiram tells me that he plans to release new editions on about the 15th of each month as a reminder to people of the upcoming date, so I'll be on top of that next month. If you have not done so already, please check in with this link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...71202996302089/> to let Hiram know your email address so he can add you to the list.

\*\*Before moving to a review of the posts this week I'd like to point out a discussion from earlier today started by Josean Figueroa [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) Josean pointed out that the Wikipedia article on Epicureanism had some commentary which Josean considered to be "really negative" for his own evaluation of Epicureanism. Here's the quote he called to our attention: ""Since learning, culture, and civilization as well as social and political involvements could give rise to desires that are difficult to satisfy and thus result in disturbing one's peace of mind, they were discouraged. Knowledge was sought only to rid oneself of religious fears and superstitions, the two primary fears to be eliminated being fear of the gods and of death. Viewing marriage and what attends it as a threat to one's peace of mind, Epicurus lived a celibate life but did not impose this restriction on his followers."

Hiram and I both responded with efforts to clarify and put these statements in context, but I have to admit - and did to Josean - that if I thought these statements were accurate I would never have had much interest in Epicurus myself. I don't think they are accurate at all, but I have to admit - and again did to Josean - that these statements do reflect, at least in my reading, the opinion of a large part of the academic world about Epicurus. Some of you reading this may even be inclined to defend the passage as written, because the truth is that there is a wide difference of opinion about the true meaning and heritage of Epicurus, and I am willing to admit that my own views are probably the minority. I come to the study of Epicurus largely through the background of Norman DeWitt's "Epicurus and His Philosophy," and Professor DeWitt's book took on the establishment on many of these same issues. For his trouble, Professor Dewitt (who during his life was a widely published and respected classical scholar) gained an icy reception from the "establishment," and to my observation rarely is he cited in the works I see published on Epicurus in the last twenty or so years. It was the view of Dewitt (and of course he is not the only one to hold these ideas) that Epicurus was widely misrepresented and almost as widely misunderstood. In this view Epicurus was the furthest thing possible from a Buddhist-in-training, but he was primarily a leading critic of both Platonism and Aristotelianism, not to mention the champion of views that the Stoics attacked relentlessly for hundreds of years.

The layers of dispute and misrepresentation are not going to be wiped away easily, and Professor DeWitt made only a start at the job. His book is now apparently out of print, and for all the interest the academics show in it, is on its way to being forgotten but for the efforts of Epicurus enthusiasts who refuse to walk the politically correct line.

Josean is right that the wikipedia article needs to be challenged and improved, and I hope one or more of us can devote the time to attack that over the coming months.

\*\*Ok, to the posts for the week:

\*\*Early in the week we noted the publication of an article based on recent work by Benard Frischer, the Epicurean scholar who is working on a variety of digital reconstructions of the Greco-Roman period. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Hiram noted that England has a group focusing on Epicuran-inspired feasts called "Only Wolves and Lions" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*One of our members posted some of his original drawings, this time of Epicurus. He is quite talented: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Steve K posted, and Tom M commented, on a meme regarding contentedness even in the face of poverty: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In a recurring theme we had another discussion of music with Epicurean themes: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Elli posted a video about the child (Sam Berns) who died this week, passing away from the condition known as Progeria that caused him to grow old at an accelerated rate, commenting that his personal philosophy sounded Epicurean.  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In case you missed it, we added to the files section of the group George Hadzsits' "Significance of Worship and Prayer among Epicureans."  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2) and direct link here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...77457512343304/> This prompted the reminder that there is a tremendous amount of great material available through JSTOR. Getting the complete article from JSTOR is a hassle, but searching is free and easy and many colleges have facilities to allow you to download JSTOR articles for free.

\*\*Andrius S. posted an article I have not yet had time to read myself, on how hedonism (a word I hate for the layers of negative connotations it holds) can morph in undesirable directions:  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Mequa's post from last week about whether Epicurean ethics would need modification for the modern world gained a second wind,  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2) as the discussion turned to sexual mores.

\*\* Steve Kles. posted a Ted-talk article on science that I have not yet heard myself:  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And last but far from least, Hiram released just as I was writing this update a new article, "How to Celebrate the Twentieth" <http://societyofepicurus.com/how-to-celebrate-the-20th/>

\*\*Ok - that's it for the week. Keep in mind that the 4th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy will take place at the Cultural Center of Pallini, Athens on February 15 and 16. Once again this year I am unable to attend, but you can find details here:  
<http://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm> and we have good reason to hope that significant excerpts from the conference will be made available to us on Youtube. It is my understanding that Elli P. is taking over administration of the Thessaloniki Epicurean website, and so we also have reason to hope for tighter communication between those of us outside Greece and those in "the homeland" of our favorite philosopher.

\*\*That's all for this week.

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Jan 25, 2014 8:43 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 1/25/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the thirty-ninth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\* First, I hope you remembered Epicurus on the 20th this past week. We had several posts marking the occasion here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2) and here [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

Hopefully in the future we'll mark these dates even more memorably, but the older I get time passes so fast that it seems like every third day is the 20th!

\*\*Posts this week were particularly vigorous.

\*\*In briefer posts, Mequa cited "Acting prudently means planting seeds now which grow into future blessings, and avoiding planting weeds now which would grow into future strife." [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Mequa also cited Thomas Jefferson's letter to William Short: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Steve Kles. found an appropriate Dilbert comic: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2) and

\*\*Tom Merle reminded us of his general grumpiness, while at the same time adopting one of the best Epicurus jpegs for his profile picture. Ah, the vagaries of life in San Francisco (be sure to wear a flower in your hair!): [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

Another post I didn't get to read was on "Happiness and its Discontents"  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And here's one I missed, Ioannis Apostolopoulos posted on the Hippocratic Oath:  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*As the week moved on, Mr. Cedervall posted photos from the happy group that got together for a meal with Ilkka V. in Finland. Of special note there was that Marjaliisa Wallenius was present. Seems like only yesterday that her husband Jaakko was here with us actively posting here and in his many other forums. It was good to see her be able to join Ilkka and others at the get-together. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* And then we have the award for the poster who generated most debate, which probably goes to Josean Figueroa this week. First, he pointed out that there are significant aspects of the Wikipedia articles on Epicurus and Epicureanism that could stand improvement. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) That led into a discussion of the tension between various interpretations of the Epicurean legacy which led to some deep discussion of physics and "living unknown". Not content to leave it alone, Tom M. spread the discussion to a second post [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2) to focus on the issue of physics and its usefulness. Lots of good discussion in both.

\*\*As the week came to a close, Mequa wrote a post commenting on Ilkka's great line that use of the term "flourishing" can be "Aristotelian hogwash." [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2) That discussion is still going on but should prove to be interesting. It is my experience that the word "flourishing" is identified as a technical term for Aristotle, but of course may others use it loosely today, so as with all things context is important.

\*\*And as for the most recent post at press time, Hiram has started a good thread on creating a handout or flyer for use in introducing new people to Epicurus. He included a link to an interesting flyer that was produced in England some time ago for what appears to be a semi-religious church service. One of our commenters remarked that it looked more appropriate for a funeral, and in my view it ought to be buried along with all other copies of the atrocious fictional portrait of Epicurus that spoils the first page! But all levity aside the flyer Hiram posted is an interesting prototype for certain uses, and surely the context and circumstances of use are going to drive how a flyer should be customized for particular occasions. Some excellent comments so far. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Ok - that's it for the week. Keep in mind that the 4th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy will take place at the Cultural Center of Pallini, Athens on February 15 and 16. You can find details here: <http://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm> . Let's hope that significant excerpts from the conference will be made available to us on Youtube, and I don't think we're going to be disappointed.

\*\*That's all for this week.

Peace and Safety!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Feb 01, 2014 7:39 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 2/1/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fortieth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*I am going to have to apologize for a brief update. I've come down with fever, chills, coughing, etc, today, and one of my personal rules is to do as little as possible that is important when I am sick, so this will be an abbreviated update.

\*\*Keep in mind that the 4th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy is coming up at the Cultural Center of Pallini, Athens on February 15 and 16. You can find details here: <http://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm> . Be on the lookout for excerpts from the conference on Youtube and their website!

\*\*Hiram wrote a good article on Philodemus' "Art of Property Management" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* A brief musical post on fighting to keep from getting "down" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Tom posted a philosophytalk link on Epicurus and the good life: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2) and also here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Tom also posted the "Hobo test" article from philosophytoday. The link may not work directly, but you can post the article name into google and get past the pay wall [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Dragan posted a link to a quote from Anatole France and his garden of Epicurus views: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In a post that got all too little attention, Brian went to a lot of trouble to prepare a diagram comparing different ways of processing observations. Charts like this are very helpful for approaching a complex topic. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Ilkka posted a very interesting article on free will from Daniel Dennett, in which Dennett criticized the view of free will held by Sam Harris. As I write this I realize that this relates to a later topic referenced below, regarding Charles Darwin. Obviously both Harris and Darwin hold certain views that are compatible with Epicureanism, but that is not to say that all their other views are compatible, and some may be quite contrary and anti-Epicurean. Sam Harris does much good, but here Dennett calls him to task in an area that I think Epicurus would consider Harris to be in error. That leads to..... [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Hiram posted this on the Society of Epicurus page about celebrating a Charles Darwin day. Again "obviously" Charles Darwin did much good work to break the stranglehold of religion on society, and for that he might deserve to be praised to the sky. But that is not to say that ALL his views are compatible with Epicureanism, and -- wading into very difficult and controversial territory - I pointed out that Fred Nietzsche was highly critical of Darwin. That strikes many of us as counterintuitive, and I would be the first to admit that reading Nietzsche is maddening and he is all over the board. However, in his more lucid moments (as I see it 😊 ) Nietzsche was very supportive of Epicurus, and Nietzsche's view of history as a conflict between free-thinkers such as Epicurus vs the resenting classes of religion are very helpful, I think. Let's face it, Epicureanism flourished (a word I use with caution, Ilkka) for hundreds of years in the face of Greco-Roman religion. So it is not fair to say that ALL religions are equally hostile and incompatible to the core with Epicureanism. Let's not be racial, let's not be prejudiced, let's not be narrow-minded, but let's also not ignore the facts, especially as they are documented by Diogenes of Oneanda and Lucian and the guilty parties themselves. Just as Nietzsche described, it was **\*\*Judaism,\*\*** and its stepchild **\*\*Christianity** that were the mortal opponents of Epicureanism. The Christians would come to say "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem" and the Judaizers would turn the name of Epicurus himself into an abomination. Until Greco-Roman civilization and its Epicurean component were absorbed into the Abrahamic religions, Epicureanism flourished. Sorry, that's just the facts. But back to topic: Nietzsche has some very complex analysis of Darwinism that goes far beyond, in my view, what most people today think

of as Darwinism. Nietzsche believed he had identified in core views of Darwin another variant of the "resentment" mentality that permeates the specific religions that destroyed Greco-Roman civilization. And to say the least, Nietzsche was not very happy about that! In the post that follows I linked to a book on "Nietzsche's Ant-Darwinism" that I am reading now and finding fascination. I highly recommend it, and that fans of Epicurus take special note that the man who saw and appreciated the merit of Epicureanism in the Greco-Roman world came to describe himself as the anti-Christian, anti-Judaic, and anti-Darwinian. I cannot say that Nietzsche was right in every respect (who can understand him all the time?) but his arguments deserve consideration. Here's the post, be sure to find the comments; you may have to track them down at the Society of Epicurus page itself. [https://www.facebook.com/SocietyOfFrien...7?stream\\_ref=10](https://www.facebook.com/SocietyOfFrien...7?stream_ref=10)

\*\* OK I have burned myself out with that Nietzsche discussion and can't go further right now. I've missed a number of good posts and urge you to visit the group, stay in touch, and let us know what you are thinking about anything related to Epicurus.

\*\*That's all for this week.

PEACE AND SAFETY -

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Feb 08, 2014 6:21 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 2/8/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-first in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and

easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*For a second week in a row I am going to have to apologize for a brief update caused by illness. Next week back to full swing.

\*\*Probably the biggest thing of note is that we are now only a week away from 4th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy is coming up at the Cultural Center of Pallini, Athens on February 15 and 16. Details, including a full copy of the upcoming agenda, are here: <http://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm>. Also:

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In posts of the week, the topic of Nietzsche addressed near the end of last week continued on posts such as this from Stephen [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Also, Stephen has set up a TinyChat chat room with video capability here: <http://tinychat.com/gardenofepicurus> This was also discussed here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Steve Ko. posted a link to an Atlantic article on emotions [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Hiram linked to an article by the leader of the "only wolves and lions" blog: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Ioannis Apostolopoulos linked to a Sam Harris video on Christian ethics (and its immorality) [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Significant discussion ensued regarding the televised Nye-Ham debate on creationism: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Tom M. posted a reminder that we have many more "likers" at the Epicurus facebook page rather than in the "Garden of Epicurus Group" itself, and that it would be beneficial to post both places. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Hiram posted to an article by Davey Lee as to the humanist perspective on Jesus: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And to close out the week Stephen R. posted to "The Psychology of Death" at Psychology Today [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* OK that's all my under-the-weather mind can muster at the moment. I'm sure I have missed a number of good posts and urge you to visit the group, stay in touch, and let us know what you are thinking about anything related to Epicurus.

\*\*That's all for this week.

PEACE AND SAFETY -

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Feb 15, 2014 7:18 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 2/15/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-second in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*As tonight's update goes to press, our friends in Greece are in the middle of the 4th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy at the Cultural Center of Pallini, Athens. The agenda is here, and I hope to be able to post links to photos and possibly videos in the near future: <http://www.epicuros.gr/pages/en.htm>. Also: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Sad to say I am still under the weather, and further set back due to our southeastern USA snowstorm, but still plugging along. Lots of good posts from others this week however:

\*\*In new blog posts, Ilkka posted on the nature of pleasure and variation in pleasure: <http://menoceus.blogspot.com/2014/02/variation-in-pleasure.html>

\*\*In the Garden of Epicurus, Tom M. linked to a PsychologyToday post on handling pain and death: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Stephen posted to three essays on comparisons / commonalities between Epicurus and Ayn Rand: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*That post prompted me to post in the "files" section an article by Jeffrey Purinton on "Epicurus and the Telos" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Hiram had a number of excellent posts this week, starting with a link to a blog post by Davey Lee regarding a humanist view of Jesus: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2) Brian added a link to a Woody Guthrie song on the same topic which was interesting if you (like me) had never heard it.

\*\*Stephen returned to the blogs this week with a new personal entry entitled "Practical Judgments and Interpersonal ethics" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2) The topic was "Although no moral absolute (in terms of right and wrong) exists, there nevertheless remains a reasonable basis for regulating personal conduct."

\*\*Agamemnon Kotsifis posted a link to an Epicurean forum (in greek) [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In perhaps the most-commented on post of the week, Hiram posted about his upcoming essay for Valentine's day on love and sex: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And for the article itself, Stephen posted to the new issue of Hiram's "Happy 20th!" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Earlier today, Stephen posted about the interesting parallels between Nietzsche's take on Buddhism and similar views in Epicureanism: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And last but not least, Hiram posted part 2 of his article on Philodemus and the art of property management [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Thanks to those who kept the ball rolling this week. I'm sure I have missed a number of good posts and urge you to visit the group, stay in touch, and let us know what you are thinking about anything related to Epicurus.

\*\*That's all for this week. Hopefully as the week proceeds we will see news of the conference in Athens.

PEACE AND SAFETY -

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Feb 22, 2014 7:23 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 2/22/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-third in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*The highlights of the past week were (1) the twentieth of February, and (2) the conclusion of the Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy in Athens. Let's start with those and the events of the week in the facebook garden, and then let's close with a couple of comments on world events in the Ukraine and Venezuela.

\*\*Commemorating both the Twentieth and the successful Athenian conference, providing us an example for how we should work to spread in Epicureanism to our local areas, was the subject of my post on the 20th: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In other posts:

\*\*Agamemnon Kotsifis posted links to photos here [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And Theodoros Paschos posted his own photos: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Ilkka posted an interesting article on a story of community involvement when witnessing a crime: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Just too late to meet the cutoff for last week's update, Steve Klesner posted an excellent blog entry on the history of Thomas More. While not explicitly Epicurean-themed, it certainly fits with Lucretius' "How great is the power of religion to provoke evil!": <http://turtlesallthewaydownblog.com/2014/02/16/tho...int-or-villain/>

\*\*And Mequa posted about a very interesting article on the subject of Plutarch, Colotes, and their debate in the ancient world on issues of legislation and politics. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*At the end of the week, Stephen R. posted asking about whether anyone had a good source for the remaining fragments of Philodemus' "On Death" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2) If you have any suggestions for sources please let him know.

\*\*Closing thoughts: Politics is a subject that Epicurus advised us to handle with extreme care, and generally as little as possible. Day to day elections and even wars parade past us on television screens to the point where we are numb to their effects, but it is very hard to look away in detachment when you see tens if not hundreds of thousands of people marching and fighting in the streets of places like the Ukraine and Venezuela. We know that there is a long-running debate, extending to the ancient world, as to how involved in politics an Epicurean should be. Lucretius dedicated his poem to the conversion of a prominent Roman politician (Memmius), but otherwise (as far as we know) he was not engaged in politics. The biography of Titus Pomponius Atticus shows that he diligently applied his Epicurean training to remaining on friendly terms with all sides of the political disputes which he found going on around him. Thus Atticus chose the course of involvement, but neutrality, rather than the course of barricading himself within his own walls. Cicero's letters to and from Cassius Longinus show us that Cassius was an earnest convert to Epicureanism even as he commanded Roman armies and steered some of the most important political events of the ancient world.

Thus there is educated Epicurean precedent for all levels of engagement, but what appears to me as the common denominator is that all our examples are essentially \*responsive\* to acts of aggression of others. Even in the case of Cassius, the conspirators' stated motivation in assassinating Caesar was to respond to what they saw (rightly or wrongly) as Caesar's destruction of the Republic. Add to these the examples those of the pre-Roman world that we know about, and we have strong evidence that Epicureans took Epicurus seriously when he warned against seeking power over others through a career of political action.

Reviewing Epicurus' position on politics reminds me how desirable it is to organize our lives so as to \*\*avoid\*\* placing ourselves in situations like Ukraine and Venezuela. In both cases, I am struck by the appearance that in both countries bloodshed or at least mass chaos seem to be inevitable. In the Ukraine, as much as one is drawn to sympathy for the marchers in Kiev, it appears that the nation is largely split geographically. If one looks to the eastern and southern

sections of the country, the leader who has been forced out of Kiev has significant support, even though we \*don't\* currently see that support on television. In Venezuela, the marchers appear to be primarily the middle/merchant class, with whom most of us reading this blog will strongly identify. But, on the other hand, the current government appears to have strong support among the very poor masses of society. Given the entrenched bitter feelings involved, it would appear to be no easier to reconcile the economic classes in Venezuela than the east-west divisions in the Ukraine. So what is "justice" in these situations?

In the last ten [Principal Doctrines](#), Epicurus left us a string of important principles for evaluating justice. They can be reviewed here: <http://www.epicurus.net/en/principal.html> The first eight point to numerous ways of seeing that natural justice does not exist in heaven or in a syllogism, but consists only as a relationship between living breathing people who agree to live together without harming one another. These eight also show that \*how\* people choose to organize themselves is not dictated by heaven or syllogisms, but changes with time and place and circumstances, with the sole legitimate consideration being the happiness of the people involved.

These principles help clarify our thoughts, but Epicurus also knew that we must prepare ourselves to face dark times. Such dark times and the threats they entail are addressed in the last two doctrines: [PD39](#): The man who best knows how to meet external threats makes into one family all the creatures he can; and those he can not, he at any rate does not treat as aliens; and where he finds even this impossible, he avoids all dealings, and, so far as is advantageous, excludes them from his life. PD 40. Those who possess the power to defend themselves against threats by their neighbors, being thus in possession of the surest guarantee of security, live the most pleasant life with one another; and their enjoyment of the fullest intimacy is such that if one of them dies prematurely, the others do not lament his death as though it called for pity.

There is no magic wand which can be waved over the Ukraine and Venezuela to bring peace. In both places, bitterly opposed groups of people with very divergent views of happiness have found themselves thrown together. Epicurus was clear that we should always to organize our lives around fellowship with our friends, and that we should separate ourselves from those with whom we cannot deal as friends ([PD39](#)). What happens when circumstances throw together ipeople who for whatever reason fundamentally disagree on what consitutes their happiness? What happens is a time bomb that eventually explodes into a Ukraine or a Venezuela.

Hopefully most of those who read these words are safe and separate from hostilities like we see in these two countries. No doubt there are many good people on all sides, and with them we can hope for a happy future for all concerned.

But wherever we are, Epicurus offers us something personal: a higher perspective. In the words of Lucretius, from the opening of his book two:

"It is sweet, when on the great sea the winds trouble its waters, to behold from land another's deep distress; not that it is a pleasure and delight that any should be afflicted, but because it is

sweet to see from what evils you are yourself exempt. It is sweet also to look upon the mighty struggles of war arrayed along the plains without sharing yourself in the danger. But nothing is more welcome than to hold the lofty and serene positions well fortified by the learning of the wise, from which you may look down upon others and see them wandering all abroad and going astray in their search for the path of life, see the contest among them of intellect, the rivalry of birth, the striving night and day with surpassing effort to struggle up to the summit of power and be masters of the world. O miserable minds of men! O blinded breasts! In what darkness of life and in how great dangers is passed this term of life whatever its duration! Not choose to see that nature craves for herself no more than this, that pain hold aloof from the body, and she in mind enjoy a feeling of pleasure exempt from care and fear? Therefore we see that for the body's nature few things are needed at all, such and such only as take away pain."

And so let's all work this coming week, as best we can, to "hold lofty and serene positions well fortified by the learning of the wise."

\*\*That's all for this week. As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Mar 01, 2014 7:24 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 3/1/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-fourth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*I am beginning to feel more kinship with Epicurus every day as I continue to labor under bad health 😊 This is one of those times I really wish we had access to one of the books that Diogenes Laertius records was written by Metrodorus: "On Epicurus' Weak Health"!

\*\*There were several interesting posts and developments this week that the update allows me to revisit:

\*\*First, Tom Merle posted on a "manifestus for the rest of us' Epicureans (a play on words from the classic Jerry Seinfeld scene <http://youtu.be/LbfMmCf5-ds>) Most amusing--this is the way the Danes and Finns live.

### [Facebook](#)

\*\*Alistair Walton posted on Alain De Botton's online philosophy newspaper, which looks at the philosophy of Epicurus. As with his book *The Consolations of Philosophy*, I think this is quite an appealing write-up of Epicureanism. <http://www.philosophersmail.com/250214-capitalism-paris.php> [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2) Well worth checking the link - the title is "Paris Hilton Reads Epicurus" and features lots of photos of the photogenic Ms. Hilton!

\*\* Agamemnon Kotsifis posted on an extract from Luke Slattery's book " Reclaiming Epicurus : Ancient Wisdom that Could Save the World ". Many people today who lack faith in a god or some other kind of supernatural force, see money and the greed of materialistic goods as the only way for happiness. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Tom M. posted that Alaine de Bolton will be in San Francisco next Wednesday on his book tour for. Not sure he has promised it but it would be really interesting to see pictures of Tom with AdB at the book tour! [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* In probably the most-commented post of the week, Lynn Relf posted on the question: "For most of human history before the Industrial Revolution things hadn't changed very much. . . . For the previous ten thousand years people wouldn't expect anything new from one generation to the next. Now we expect our children's lives to be really different from ours" (Paul Warde on BBC World Service "Elements — Carbon"). [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2) Several good responsive comments, especially David L.'s that even though the pace of change has accelerated, change really has been a part of life for several thousand years now.

\*\*Mequa posted this week on the article. "Epistemology As A Foundation For Epicurean Thought": <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent...515&context=etd> I found this to be a particularly good article, and here's the abstract: "Epicurean philosophy is perhaps best known for its ethical system, which places an emphasis on the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain, and for its removal of the gods from the physical world. While many approaches have been made to interpret Epicureanism through its ethics, I believe that the whole of the Epicurean system of philosophy can be comprehended by a thorough understanding of its epistemology. Using Lucretius' De Rerum Natura, I hope to show that Epicurean thought is based not on ethics but rather on the epistemological claim that the senses cannot be rebutted. In doing so, I will also resolve some of the inherent contradictions that arise from the Epicureans' empirical understanding of the world, such as how the senses can be deceived, and how the world can be comprised of imperceptible atoms." I confess to only making it half-way through so far, but I really like what I have read to that point. I had a few minor quibbles with a couple of almost off-hand comments she made, which I posted about here: <http://www.newepicurean.com/three-common-i...the-same-goals/> but in general the main thrust of her article is excellent and I highly recommend it!

\*\*Mequa also posted a question about the best available translation of the [Principal Doctrines](#): [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2) A number of good ones were suggested, including the one at Epicurus.info and its wiki. But I particularly like the comment made by Colotes Galenios: "Who of us knows Old Greek enough to be able to judge?" That why it is long seemed to me to be the best idea to make a point of reading \*several\* translations to check where the translators agree and disagree.

\*\*And last of all for the week, Hiram C. posted about the pleasures of tumblr! as a social media outlet for posting short, shareable Epicurean memes. He has asked that if you're on tumblr please subscribe + share the Society of Epicurus content; and please also send any Epicurean memes my way so that I can add them to the tumblr queue [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2) Sounds like a great suggest; I confess that tumblr is something that I have failed to keep up with, so good to see Hiram taking the initiative.

\*\*As of this moment, that's it for the week, and for the month of February. Seasons are changing soon and though our friends in Australia will be getting colder, the northern hemisphere is long overdue for some warm weather.

\*\*As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

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Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Mar 08, 2014 7:35 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 3/8/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-fifth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*The month of March has gotten off to a promising start, and the activity award for the week probably goes to Mequa for starting it off and then ending it with a tour-de-force (American French) sally against the Stoics. But let's take it chronologically:

\*\* First off was a graphic of "the new sage in town" <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...36563948&type=1> that hopefully did not ignore our Buddhist friends.

\*\*Next Agamemnon Kotsifis posted the link to Alain de Botton's excellent video on Epicureanism [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2) which shines an Epicurean light on the "commercialism" of modern society.

\*\*If you missed it, the most-commented thread of the week was the "Philosophy Explained" meme explaining all the main philosophies in terms of donuts. A total of almost 30 creative suggestions for how our favorite philosopher might have been represented. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Ilkka posted a reminder that living unknown can be advantageous, and would have been a better choice for this philosopher in Finland who paid for his mistake by being stabbed. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Elli and our friend with a Greek name that my character set will not let me type posted one of the greeting videos used at the recent conference in Athens: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And then Elli posted the video of the mayor making the announcement that "the municipality of Gerakas ( birth place of philosopher Epicurus which called in the ancient period "Gargitos" ) will devote exclusively an outer space - a plaza of five acres land, which will be named "GARDEN OF EPICURUS". The work will be completed later this year until May. It will be an extremely elegant promenade and recreation place. Any intervention and proposal of Epicureans for this space to be better, is acceptable from the services of the municipality. And next year at the Symposium, since this outdoor area will be ready, we will have all together a nice tour and discussions about the epicurean philosophy." [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Ionnis Apostolopoulos posted a great link to a modern couple emulating an ancient Greek wedding ceremony: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH\\_Bq1HNrbY&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH_Bq1HNrbY&feature=youtu.be) Looks to me like the groom did not fully get into the act, but the bride sure looks classical!

\*\*In a post on another board (ominously titled "Letters to the Devil") Mequa posted a list of examples where Epicureanism has seemed to inspire a variant of "satanism" developed by Anton Lavey. This is a subject I know little about, other than that LaVey's philosophy leans heavily on a "naturalist" approach which does have some parallels with Epicurus. No telling who will come across that post and perhaps develop an interest in Epicurus, and anyone who might find their way from satanism to Epicureanism would surely be better off. Here's the link: <http://www.satannet.com/forum/ubbthrea...5147#Post495147>

\*\*To close out the week, Mequa posted an excellent response to an exchange he had seen on a Stoic board. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=3](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=3) It is worth posting in full as a great capper to the week: "A response of mine to Donald Robertson on his Stoicism Group, following on from a quote from him: "I believe that the "promise of philosophy" is that virtue will alleviate emotional suffering, although paradoxically it may expose us to death, poverty, and greater physical pain, and discomfort, in the process." - then why be "virtuous" when it leads to death, poverty, and greater physical pain? This isn't "virtue" in the sense of "in virtue of", it's more like Christian self-abnegation, "suffering for the sake of righteousness". Martyrdom. Moral tyranny. If you judge another person by those standards, condemn them for not sacrificing survival, health, and freedom from personal suffering at the altar of your

dogmatic standard of "virtue" - you clearly don't have their best interests at heart, and seek to poison them with guilt and shame. Psychologically, this is rooted in the desire for other people to sacrifice themselves to you, under a veneer of self-righteousness and hypocrisy. Hence Nietzsche's analysis of the immoral roots of "morality" (by its own standards). Epicurean ethics does not suffer from this problem. The Epicurean can value and respect a friend - in a healthy give-and-take relationship - because he values and respects himself, and is honest enough to admit that. Like the Christian, the Stoic's moral acid would lead him to martyr himself to "virtue", and leads directly to demanding the same from others, judging and mistrusting others who do not profess the same values out of hypocritical vested self-interest - and encouraging a friend on a course of potential self-destruction in the name of "virtue". Stoic ethics strikes me as a fascism of the soul. Little different, at core, from the self-abnegating, guilt-ridden Christian values I was brought up with. Both use mysticism to paint self-destruction as true self-interest. A Noble Lie, in my view, and poisonous to life." Excellent comments follow: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=3](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=3)

\*\*As I put this week's Update to bed, it seems like several places in the world are more troubled than usual tonight. I don't know that we have any Ukrainian readers in the Garden of Epicurus, but I know we do have numbers of readers from the general region, and I certainly wish them Peace and Safety in dealing with the unsettled developments there. In the Southeast Pacific we certainly have many friends in Australia, and although the disappearance of the Malaysian airliner may prove to be purely accidental, there are troubling indications that more is involved, and if so it is to be hoped that that region of the world also avoids unnecessary turmoil. Hopefully both these situations will clarify and calm down by this time next week, but regardless of the nature of the trouble, we know a philosopher who can give sage advice in facing adversity of any kind.

\*\*As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

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Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Mar 15, 2014 9:38 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 3/15/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-sixth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*Wow March is proving to be a month to remember. But lets take it chronologically in the world of Epicurus as usual first:

\*\* First off, Mequa started the week with a post on friendship between Stoics and Epicureans: "On the topic of friendship between Stoics and Epicureans, which was common in the ancient world and, with the revival of both philosophies, an important issue today...." [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Next up was also Mequa, on the topic of a blog post at a site called myleftwing.com. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2) If you missed it, Tom M. posted in this thread an excellent video called "The Marshmellow Test" which explored how children react to the problem of having the choice between one marshmellow now or two marshmellows if they wait a few minutes before eating the first one. Be sure to check that one out: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...otal\\_comments=3](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...otal_comments=3)

\*\* Mequa followed with another cross-post from the Stoic group, describing differences between the Classical formulation (in my understanding) and his own neo-Epicureanism, [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Following that was good link to a quote found on a Catholic forum:: <http://forums.catholic.com/showthread.php?t=555378> "What Kant does is to separate goodness from happiness. This has been the single most destructive notion in the whole history of ethics. It is because of Kant that virtue is seen as torture or as boring; and happiness is seen as immoral. To picture the good man as the miserable man is an utter degradation of human nature." [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Agamemnon Kotsifis posted a link from the Catholic Encyclopedia that contains an article about Epicurus and Epicureanism as a way of life, which has of course a stoical point of view: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Next up was an excellent new post by Ilkka on his Menoecus blog -- [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2) The topic was: "Why are things created by mankind considered unnatural? Are not ourselves and our creative capacities just as natural as everything else? Are we not merely another mechanism in the process of natural creation? When ants burrow into the earth to build a home is it more natural than when man mines minerals and cuts down trees for the same end?"

\*\* No doubt at the inspiration of Mequa, the Stoic facebook page ran a "Hug an Epicurean Week" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) I didn't check too far into their site but in the thread to this link I pointed out an amusing Stoic complaint: "I recently tried making some of my friends read the Enchiridion but they either find it boring or too cold-hearted to be implemented (i.e. when Epictetus says: If you kiss your child, or your wife, say that you only kiss things which are human, and thus you will not be disturbed if either of them dies.) Do you think this is because some people are not yet ready for it? Or perhaps because Stoicism is not for everyone?" <<< YA THINK?????

\*\*As the week wound down Hiram posted to [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) in regard to the link between atheism and economic productivity and innovation.

\*\*And then today Hiram released the March edition of the Happy Twentieth! newsletter. Excellent format and content! Be sure you are on the email list! <http://us3.campaign-archive2.com/?u=c2e20fc0ffb...41&e=ab94676592>

\*\*And it was good to hear from Colotes Galenios again! Today he posted a link to THE POPE discussing "have the courage to be happy." Wow. As if his group hadn't spend two thousand years opposing that! [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*And to cap off the week, just before the update, I posted a new blog entry on how Epicurus' view of the nature of justice helps us to analyze crises such as the one in Ukraine and Malaysian flight M370. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Last week as I put the update to bed, I said that it seems like several places in the world were more troubled than usual, and I wished readers in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia Peace and Safety in dealing with the unsettled developments there. The events of the last seven days have simply escalated the tension, so let me repeat my final words: "In the Southeast Pacific we certainly have many friends in Australia, and although the disappearance of the Malaysian airliner may prove to be purely accidental, there are troubling indications that more is involved, and if so it is to be hoped that that region of the world also avoids unnecessary turmoil. Hopefully both these situations will clarify and calm down by this time next week, but regardless of the nature of the trouble, we know a philosopher who can give sage advice in facing adversity of any kind." That comment and the advice to consult Epicurus still applies, in spades.

\*\*As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

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Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Mar 22, 2014 8:29 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 3/22/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-seventh in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*March continues to be an active month. I would never have thought that we'd still be in the dark about MH370 so long after the event, and now there is a debate taking on a life of its own as to how close the event should be covered by the press. I bet the last two weeks have seen more mention of Occam's razor than the last twenty years. And indeed the mystery of that flight tests our thought processes and brings to the front our inclinations to see what we want to see. I posted to my personal page a summary that I think is very helpful for understanding the benefits and hazards of Occam's razor, here: [https://www.facebook.com/cassius.amicus...5?stream\\_ref=10](https://www.facebook.com/cassius.amicus...5?stream_ref=10) Worth a read.

\*\*First in order of posts in the Garden for the week was Tom Merle's link to "The Long Reach of Reason" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) Here's the blurb that describes the video: "An animated Socratic dialog! In a time when irrationality seems to rule both politics and culture, has reasoned thinking finally lost its power? Watch as psychologist Steven Pinker is gradually, brilliantly persuaded by philosopher Rebecca Newberger Goldstein that reason is actually the key driver of human moral progress, even if its effect sometimes takes generations to unfold."

\*\*Next, in my neverending quest to enlighten the world as to the hazards of Platonism (and its descendant, Stoicism) I linked to quote from the Nietzsche page. Worth repeating in full! : " To be attracted to the Platonic dialogue, this horribly self-satisfied and childish kind of dialectic, one must never have read good French writers — Fontenelle, for example. Plato is boring. In the end, my mistrust of Plato goes deep: he represents such an aberration from all the basic Greek instincts, is so moralistic, so pseudo-Christian (he already takes the concept of "the good" as the highest concept) that I would prefer the harsh phrase "higher swindle" or, if it sounds better, "idealism" for the whole phenomenon of Plato." - Friedrich Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols

\*\*This past week included the Twentieth, but in my continuing struggle to type Greek characters I cannot even cite the name of the Garden member who posted the first graphic. Have a look for yourself: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...79126887&type=1>

\*\*In my own twentieth post, I highlighted some good news - at least for me. I was not aware that within the last year, Hackett Publishing had released Martin Ferguson Smith's translation of Lucretius in EPUB format. This is going to make my own work in writing about Lucretius much easier. I sound like I get a commission for pushing this book, but of course I do not. I simply want to make all fans of Epicurus aware that though Lucretius can be intimidating reading, there is a clear, modern, understandable translation available. This is the translation that introduced Steven Greenblatt to Epicurus for his book "The Swerve" and it is the single must-have version for every new student of Epicurus. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Hiram, who has been doing great work at the Society of Epicurus, posted an article "Defending Giordano Bruno" in the context of the recent COSMOS television show: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Hiram also posted an excellent testimonial piece for The Humanist, written by Hiram's publisher, on how he celebrates the 20th. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...4/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Last in the week so far, Hiram posted about the difficulties he has run into in writing about Philodemus given the few texts that are available. It is my understanding that On Methods of Inference is probably the most complete, but many of the rest are mere fragments. If you have sources you can suggest, please add them to the thread. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*One more thing that has not yet been posted about but I want to add here, and will post further about later. One of our Garden members, Ed L., has been working more lately with 3d printing, and he has asked me if I had any idea how he could get photographs to build a 3d model of the bust of Metrodorus. I told him that I don't have one to photograph, and I doubt one exists outside a museum. If anyone knows of a museum where a bust of Metrodorus is readily accessible, please let us know!

\*\*Once again as I put this update to bed there is trouble both in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia (MH370). If you or any loved ones are in harm's way I certainly wish peace and safety to you all. In the comments to this post [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2) we had some interesting views exchanged showing how even fans of Epicurus can view things differently. As I always like to point out, we have absolutely no context for the "Live Unknown" text, so we do not know how Epicurus applied this in every situation. We have many different views on that, but all of us I think recognize that our goal is not to live unknown, or to live known for that matter, but to live according to circumstance to maximize our happy living. Perhaps in the future we can open a sub-forum or special place to discuss that kind of current events which we ordinarily stay away from.

\*\*As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

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Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Mar 29, 2014 9:34 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 3/29/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-eighth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*Still in the dark as to MH370 and the outcome of tensions in Ukraine! A special wish for peace and safety to any readers we have in those parts of the world.

\*\*This week has been another good one, but the update is a little short due to most of the conversation being in only a couple of posts. First, an administrative note. I received an email from a reader asking for help in obtaining, if possible, and English translation of a presentation at the 2014 Pan Hellenic Symposium entitled "Epicurean cognitive psychotherapy" by Manolis Kougioumtzoglou. If anyone has any leads which we might follow to ask about this, please post a comment here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Next, Hiram posted a link to an entry on Lucretius at the "Cartoon History of Humanism." Very elaborate and creative and worth checking out: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*In what I consider one of the highlights of the week, Hiram released a major blog entry entitled "The Perils of Alienation" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2) Let me take the liberty of excerpting a part of my comment on it. Among the parts I liked most was this part "This is why, prior to the study of Ethics, Epicurus advised the study of the Canon and of PHYSICS: a good foundation of understanding about the nature of things is needed in order to live a good life. The science of ethics can only be grasped after we understand Physics. All true philosophy must be based on the study of nature. We DO NOT believe that it's healthy for people to have to choose between science and spirituality: the only acceptable form of spirituality must have a firm scientific base." I so very much agree with that. Whether we call it physics or more generally "The Nature of Things", it is necessary to know the basic facts of reality before we can decide how to live. If in fact the goblins of the kinds of religion you talk about DID exist, and if in fact they WERE in control of the universe, and they DID reward their friends and punish their enemies, then WE would be wrong for not joining them! But the FACT is that they are wrong - they have no proof for their speculations! Nevertheless, a basic understanding of Nature - that it works "naturally" and not by the whim of goblins - is the only way for us to have confidence that these cults are wrong. And to understand "Nature" we have to understand that rational use of "the senses" (in Epicurean terms) is the only valid way to separate true from false. Those two subjects (the facts of Nature and the rational use of the senses) have to be studied TOGETHER to make any sense. Only when we are grounded in these two subjects can we then proceed to Ethics to determine how to live. Great article! <<< Lots of other commentary on this one. Check it out.

\*\*Next, Tom M. posted a link to a thought-provoking article by Alain de Botton entitled: "The Philosophers' Guide to Calm" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2) As usual where "calm" is under discussion, this article provided another opportunity to discuss the Epicurean conception of pleasure and the way that "calmness" factors into the big picture. This is one of the most important topics in Epicureanism, especially as it is distinguished from Stoicism. I won't excerpt the extensive discussion here, but I highly recommend the comments on this one as a good discussion of the topic.

\*\*Last for the week was a post by Steve Ko. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2) on The Wisdom of Aging Well According to Epicurus. This one focused on several good points from Daniel Klein's 2012 book, "Travels With Epicurus: A Journey to a Greek Island in Search of a Fulfilled Life"

\*\*As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Apr 05, 2014 9:49 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 4/5/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the forty-ninth in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a

personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the Garden of Epicurus forum as closely as I do I hope you'll find it to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*First off this week was Agamemnon Kotsifis, who posted on an article about living the " Good Life " as an Epicurean. Agamemnon wrote "It's an excerpt from the book of Jules Evans " Philosophy for Life and Other Dangerous Situations ". " .... If Governments want to teach the " good life " to their citizens, they should teach the various approaches to the good life, rather than pretending there is only one solution " . The link is here: <http://philosophyforlife.org/philosophies-for-life/epicureans/>

\*\*Hiram's blog entry entitled "The Perils of Alienation" continued to get comments this week. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2) The discussion turned to the appropriate degree of Epicurean involvement in the world at large, which called for reconsideration of what Diogenes of Oinoanda had written: "But, as I have said before, the majority of people suffer from a common disease, as in a plague, with their false notions about things, and their number is increasing (for in mutual emulation they catch the disease from one another, like sheep) moreover, [it is] right to help [also] generations to come (for they too belong to us, though they are still unborn) and, besides, love of humanity prompts us to aid also the foreigners who come here." "observing that these people are in this predicament, I bewailed their behaviour and wept over the wasting of their lives, and I considered it the responsibility of a good man to give [benevolent] assistance, to the utmost of one's ability, to those of them who are well-constituted." As usual Tom hit the point well that we are generally going to find the best use of our time to be among our own friends and neighbors, rather than worrying about the world at large, which I agree is correct.

\*\*Next, Tom M. posted a link to an article on how it is a key component of our philosophy to maximize choice and minimize control by others. One must balance the need to bring home the bacon and unabated pleasure--not easy. This was illustrated with a link about cubicles and workspace design: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*Late in the week was a post I made on Unsung Heroes of Epicureanism: Philonides of Laodicea, who was one of the more important proponents of Epicureanism in the ancient world [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...8/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* To close, Steve Ko. posted a link to [medicalexpress.com](https://www.medicalexpress.com) article entitled "Gratitude, not 'gimme,' makes for more satisfaction, study finds" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2) This was an excellent reminder of the \*VERY\* important role that gratitude played in the ancient Epicurean lifestyle. This is a topic that Norman DeWitt hits very well, and he states that he thinks that "Gratitude" was second only to "honesty" as a uniquely Epicurean virtue. Gratitude plays a prominent role in the

letter to Menoeceus, and the saying exists that a certain man grew old the very day that he stopped being grateful for his past blessings. Since the update is short this week, let me post an excerpt from Norman DeWitt on this critical topic, from chapter 14 of *Epicurus and His Philosophy*:

## GRATITUDE

Had Epicurus been called upon to name his cardinal virtues there is little doubt that the foremost place would have been given to honesty or being true to one's self. Neither can there be much doubt that the second place would have been assigned to gratitude. No other virtue, except honesty, possessed for him such breadth of application. While primarily denoting the proper attitude to be assumed toward the past, it applied also to the present and was of ever increasing importance throughout life, reaching a peak in old age. Neither did any other virtue, unless honesty, present so many facets. It was due to teachers, Nature, friends, and patrons. It was extolled as a preserver of youth, as a healing influence in sorrow, as a preventive of vice, and a means of robbing the grave of its victory.

In the conventional ethics of the Greeks there was no lack of emphasis upon gratitude, but in the teachings of Epicurus it gained freshness of definition in proportion as it became integrated with a novel structure of ethics. In relation to happiness, the goal of living, it functioned as a chief coefficient, just as ingratitude was a chief cause of misery. In respect of free will, it represented the proper attitude to be chosen toward the past, though active also in the present. The cultivation of it presumed the feasibility of a total control of experience, including thought itself: "Moreover, it lies in our power to bury, as it were, unhappy memories in everlasting oblivion and to recall happy memories with sweet and agreeable recollection." With fools, on the contrary, to recall the past is to regret it; they torture themselves with the recollection of past mistakes and misfortunes.

As became a moralist, Epicurus was capable of great scorn and was not impressed by tradition, no matter how hallowed by fame and antiquity. He was no more awed by the alleged wisdom of Solon than Solon had been by the riches of Croesus. Solon refused to judge a man happy until death had placed him beyond the reach of misfortune. Epicurus said, *Vatican Saying 75*: "The adage which says, 'Look to the end of a long life,' bespeaks a lack of gratitude for past blessings." He was equally ready to defy popular belief, above all by denying all gratitude to the gods. Nor did he hesitate to set himself in opposition to the growing cult of Fortune by warning his disciples to look on her favors with distrust.

No less radical was his parting with Plato, whose espousal of the contemplative life along with the belief in immortality was bound to result in construing life as a preparation for death. Epicurus, denying immortality, was equally bound to think of life as narrowly confined to the interval between birth and death and consequently to construe it as a preparation for a happy and triumphant old age. For this victory over death and the grave he found the cause in gratitude for past blessings. The happy life was the grateful life, terminating at last in the fullness of pleasures in old age.

## GRATITUDE TO TEACHERS

The duty of gratitude to parents was an assumption of Greek morals and called for no special emphasis. In Hippocratic ethics the obligation of the medical apprentice to the teaching physician was placed on the same basis. This analogy was accepted by Epicurus but underwent a certain enlargement in his thinking, which may be demonstrated by the usual chain argument: the greatest good is life itself and the fulfillment of life is found in tranquillity of mind; this in turn depends upon knowing the true way of life; consequently the greatest gratitude is due to the pathfinder who has discovered the true way and sets the feet of the disciple in the road he must follow.

The thought of a financial nexus between leader and disciple was abhorrent to Epicurus. In his judgment the relationship should be personal and ethical. He scorned the mandatory communism of Pythagoras, "because such a practice was for those who distrusted one another and if men were not to be trusted neither were they friends." He must have scorned also the exactions of the sophists, who were able to collect exorbitant fees so long as Athenian purses were bulging with imperial prosperity. It is a commonplace of handbooks that the Sicilian Gorgias could charge one hundred minas, the price of a house, for a single course of instruction; the garden of Epicurus cost only eighty.

The proper relation between teacher and pupils was regarded as identical with that of father to children. Only in the light of this truth is it possible to arrive at a correct translation of an excerpt from a letter of Epicurus to his chief financial supporter, Idomeneus of Lampsacus: "Send us, therefore, your first-fruits for the sustenance of my sacred person and for that of my children, for so it occurs to me to express it." This attitude was not original with him. A model for it may be recognized in the language of the Hippocratic oath: "I will look upon him who has taught me the art as I do my parents and will share with him my livelihood; if he is in need I will give him money." This is part of the genuinely anthropocentric ethic of Ionian science as opposed to the state-centered philosophy of Athens and Plato.

In the case of Epicurus this gratitude is obscured by the excess of admiration, reverence, and worship on the part of his followers; but the relationship of father and son, which he specifically approved, is also on record in the text of Lucretius: "It is thou, Father, who art the discoverer of truth, it is thou who givest us precepts as a father would." In the course of time, as Greek philosophy drifted closer and closer to religious conceptions, the idea of fatherhood was extended to that of savior. It is this epithet that we find in the Latin inscription of the devoted Plotina, wife of the Emperor Trajan, while the word salvation occurs in the long inscription of the Epicurean Diogenes of Oenoanda.<sup>116</sup>

## GRATITUDE TO NATURE

The duty of gratitude to Nature is on record in these words: "Gratitude is due to blessed Nature because she has made life's necessities easy of acquisition and those things that are difficult of acquisition unnecessary." The true basis of the debt to Nature, however, is to be found in her function as a teacher. She is not to Epicurus, as she was to Aristotle, merely the creative force

in the universe. She was also the aggregate of animate experience and especially of human experience.

It is Nature that reveals the Canon of truth and bestows upon man the means of contact between his soul and the material world, Sensations, Anticipations, Feelings. The true end of living as she reveals it is "the end of Nature." True justice is "the justice of Nature." The true attitude toward the desires consists in recognizing "the limits of Nature." The true attitude toward riches and poverty demands knowledge of "the wealth of Nature." She is the ethical teacher: "Nature teaches us to think the gifts of Fortune as of minor value and to know that when we are fortunate we are unfortunate." In the language of Lucretius she is so eager for men to know the truth that she "barks" it aloud, like a faithful dog that is keen to give warning. In a magnificent passage toward the end of the third book the poet steps aside and yields the pulpit to her so that in her own person she may lash self-pitying old men for their ingratitude. If we take Nature in this Epicurean sense as a benevolent teacher, then gratitude is an imperative of Nature. It is owed to her by man and she in turn enjoins it upon man.

#### GRATITUDE TO FRIENDS

It is perhaps worth while to distinguish gratitude for friendship from gratitude to friends. For the former there was the more room and call because no gratitude was due to the gods; even the favors of Fortune were not to be received with gratitude but rather with caution and distrust. The acquisition of friendship was regarded as the most precious of all preparations for the happy life. It was upon friendship that Epicureans depended alike for peace and safety, an essential prerequisite of happiness, and for good companionship, an essential component of happiness.

The topic of friendship suddenly assumed both a new guise and a fresh importance in the life of Epicurus because of the rise of the Macedonian monarchies. Even before the time of Alexander the Platonic dream of a philosopher-king had given a powerful stimulus to the reception of young philosophers in royal courts. After Alexander's death the multiplication of courts served to multiply the opportunities for the graduates of the schools that were partial to monarchy. Even Epicurus himself became a beneficiary of the gifts of Idomeneus of Lampsacus, who, if not a monarch, was a man of power and affluence under a monarchy.

Under these circumstances, therefore, it is not surprising that Epicurus should have published a book to fit the time, entitled *On Gifts and Gratitude*. Not a single specific quotation from this work seems to be on record but with some degree of plausibility a pair of excerpts may be referred to it. The first runs as follows: "Friendship has its origin in human needs. It is necessary, however, to prepare the way for it in advance — for we also sow seed in the ground — but it crystallizes through a reciprocity of benefits among those who have come to enjoy pleasures to the full." The meaning of this is partly clear and partly obscure. Familiar already is the doctrine that friendships must be deliberately cultivated as a matter of expediency in the interests of peace and safety.

The point that may seem obscure is contained in the word reciprocity but this may be cleared up through our good fortune in possessing an epistle of Horace, 1.7, which the title On Gifts and Gratitude fits with precision. The poet, addressing Maecenas, who was pressing his rights as patron too rigorously, states his stand as follows: "The good and wise man declares himself willing to assist the deserving and I too shall show myself deserving in proportion to the merit of my benefactor." This is the "reciprocity." The relation must be reciprocal, and the client is no more bound to owe gratitude than is the patron. The relation must be in balance. The pleasure of the one is not to exceed the pleasure of the other.

The second dictum that seems to be an excerpt from the roll of Epicurus above mentioned runs as follows: "The wise man alone will know true gratitude and with respect to friends, whether present or absent, will be of the same mind throughout the whole journey of life." This contains two statements. The meaning of the first is clarified by the negative form of the same truth in the epistle of Horace cited above, lines 20-21: "The open-handed fool makes a gift of that in which he sees no use or value. This is a seed-bed that has produced crops of ingrates in the past and will do so for all years to come." The fool is incapable of giving wisely; he fails to see that true gratitude presumes a reciprocity of benefits.

The second statement, that only the wise man will always be of the same mind toward friends, is clarified by an exposition of the corresponding vice in a satire of Horace. The man who is lacking in true gratitude will speak ill of his friend behind his back, will not defend him when maligned, will betray confidences, and make a sacrifice of friendship to raise a laugh. Such a man is niger, "black," the color of poison, which is the opposite of "white," candidus; the virtue is candor, a name to which Epicureanism gave vogue in Latin. It denotes a phase of that absolute and incorruptible honesty which to Epicurus was the cardinal virtue. Being unalterably honest, the wise man will be loyal to friends at all times, and being always loyal, he will always be grateful.

## FRUITS OF GRATITUDE

Unlike the Stoics who came after him, Epicurus entertained no distrust of the emotions. To the wise man he ascribed an exceptional depth of feeling. At the same time he was mindful of expediency. Emotions under proper control contributed to happiness, and happiness was a form of the advantageous.

One of the foremost recommendations of gratitude was its value as preserver of youthfulness: "Both when young and when old one should devote himself to philosophy in order that while growing old he shall be young in blessings through gratitude for what has been." The converse of this truth is on record in Vatican Saying 19, which refers to an unnamed person: "Forgetting the good that has been, he becomes an old man this very day."

The fruits of gratitude are sometimes emphasized by warnings against the evils of ingratitude, as in Vatican Saying 35: "We must not spoil the enjoyment of the blessings we have by pining for those we have not but rather reflect that these too are among the things desirable." The habit of ingratitude creates an opening for fears: "The life of the fool is marked by ingratitude

and apprehension; the drift of his thought is exclusively toward the future." Even gluttony is linked with ingratitude, Vatican Saying 69: "It is the ungratefulness in the soul that renders the creature endlessly lickerish of embellishments in diet." The argument here subsumed is that gratitude is due to Nature for rendering the necessities easy of acquisition, the luxuries difficult.

Gratitude for the blessing of friendship is extolled for its comforting and healing influence, Vatican Saying 55: "One should heal his misfortunes by grateful recollection of friends who have passed on and by reflecting that what has once happened cannot be undone." There is something pathetic about this emphasis among Epicureans upon the irrevocability of the past and the inalienability of past pleasures. When Epicurus, in Vatican Saying 66, wrote, "Let us show our sympathy with our friends, not by wailing but by taking thought," it was almost certainly meant that comfort should be found in the thought, as Horace expressed it, that Jupiter himself was impotent to cancel the recollection of a happy past. This conceit seems to have been built up as part of the counterpoise to the surrender of an afterlife.

It was as a counterpoise that the supreme reward of gratitude was to be reaped. It was not St. Paul but Epicurus who first made an issue of the sting of death. The good Epicurean was to escape this sting through habituating himself to the thought "that [death is nothing to us](#)." The wise man takes leave of life as a spectator issuing from the theater or as a satisfied guest taking his departure from a banquet, having enjoyed the fullness of pleasure.<sup>128</sup> The devoted Diogenes of Oenoanda looks forward to taking his leave of life with a paean of victory on his lips. Metrodorus had set a model for him, Vatican Saying 47: "When Necessity does remove us, spitting scornfully upon life and those who foolishly cling to it, we shall depart this life with a beauteous paean of victory, raising the refrain that we have lived a good life."

This thought of victory over death was so captivating to St. Paul as to inspire one of his finest flights of eloquence, 1 Corinthians 15, where he employs the vocabulary of Epicurus while demolishing his doctrine: "O death, where is thy

sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Victory over death was claimed by both creeds, the one by the denial of immortality, the other by the assertion of it.

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Apr 12, 2014 11:16 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 4/12/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the milestone FIFTHIETH in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> Registration is free and easy, and if you subscribe to the "This Week in Epicureanism" thread, you will receive emailed updates each time a "This Week In Epicureanism" post is made. I compile these each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of what people are talking about, and if you don't have time to monitor the facebook forums as closely as I do I hope you'll find this to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*This week saw the launching of a new Epicurean Facebook group that I encourage everyone with an interest in Epicurus to "join." The new "Epicurean Philosophy" group ( <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> ) has a bit of history behind it that is worth relating. The Epicurean world has a number of excellent websites (collected here: <http://epicuruscentral.wordpress.com/> ), but the real breakthrough in Epicurean communication came several years ago with the "Garden of Epicurus" facebook group set up by Jaakko Wallenius of Finland ( [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaakko\\_Wallenius](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaakko_Wallenius) ). Jaakko was a prolific writer and journalist, and he launched a flotilla of websites dedicated to the many philosophers he admired, including the Garden of Epicurus group. Jaakko was always up-front that he was not an "orthodox" Epicurean, and indeed his wikipedia entry states that "he considered himself an Epicurean Stoic Humanist as well as an atheist." Jaakko always endured with good humor the ribbing of more orthodox types who wondered what a "Stoic" and "Atheist" saw in Epicurus. Regardless of his personal heresies (more humor), Jaakko was a fountain of excellent writing, and he single-handedly popularized many of his websites in addition to the Garden of Epicurus.

Tragedy struck in November of 2011, however, when Jaakko was diagnosed with inoperable cancer. In his last entry to his blog, Being Human, Jaakko wrote: "I am still here thanks to chemotherapy that has given me an additional year and a half, but the therapies were terminated a week ago because their ability to fight my cancer has waned off. I am on my own now, but nobody knows how soon the end will come. However, it is quite certain that I will not see my 56th birthday in January of 2014." He died on June 11, 2013.

The world of popular philosophy lost a great mind on that date, and his family lost a loved-one, to all of whom are owed our most serious condolences and appreciation. In comparison, our loss of a group admin is nothing.

Now, with that comment, I end the solemnity and will carry on as I think Jaakko would want, with good-natured ribbing in a most deliberate way.

Jaakko was a great admirer of Marcus Aurelius, for reasons I accepted with chagrin. Well -- in the TRUE fashion of Marcus Aurelius, who through Stoic fatalism left the Roman Empire in a HUGE jam by failing to line up a capable successor, Jaakko left our little Garden of Epicurus facebook group in a similar quandry. Unlike Epicurus, who with foresight designated Hermarchus to take over leadership of the school after his death, prior to his illness Jaakko had never designated any additional admins for the group. Therefore, with Jaakko's passing, his admin password also crossed the River Styx into Acheron -- or whatever fiction the Stoics would prefer us to believe!

Despite long efforts by Ilkka, myself, and others, we have not been able to get Facebook to allow the active members of the group to designate new admins. Jaakko's family has been contacted, and has responded graciously, but apparently they do not have access to the password either. For that reason, since Jaakko's death, we have had no "moderation" for the group, meaning no ability to supervise the adding of new members to the group or otherwise handle the administrative aspects of keeping a group in good order.

Now the Garden of Epicurus is no ordinary group, of course, so as you would expect the issues have been few, and we've had no troubles of any significance. But because we had no admin, we could not see or respond to the "join" requests that sometimes came in, and THAT is a problem, as we want to respond quickly to all who indicate an interest in Epicurus.

Likewise, I believe we would all like to think that our group will expand over time. The larger it gets, the more we can expect issues to arise in the future which will require moderation. Suffice it to say on that point that a number of Epicurean views are "mildly controversial" so as our numbers and visibility increase, we can expect to have the need to stamp out the trolls.

All of that is a long story to (1) honor and appreciate what Jaakko has done for us, and (2) explain why Stephen Harvey-Brooks took the initiative this past week to set up the new "Epicurean Philosophy" group. He has designated several of our active members as admins already, so we should have no further recurrence of our loss of control over the group. So far as I know he has not set up any kind of "polity" for running the group, but perhaps that will come over time if in fact enough people find it to be of use. Stephen has a \*great\* deal of experience in administering online groups. He is also the webmaster of the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum, and he has administered many other forums in the past. I am sure that he would like to hear from anyone with comments or suggestions about the group, and I am sure he would appreciate your participation in any way you like.

So if you have not already done so, please go over now to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> and be sure that you are listed as a member of the new group. I think what we are about to find is that many of us will cross-post to both groups (as well as to the NewEpicurean and the SocietyofEpicurus facebook homes as well. Facebook seems to do a good job combining multiple posts into a single facebook timeline entry, but let us know if you start getting too many multiple entries on your timeline.

\*\* That's the big news of the week, but we also had several significant posts to mention -

\*\*First, immediately after last week's update, Stephen posted an excellent passage on how Epicureanism has helped him overcome a tendency to nihilism: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...2/?stream_ref=2) This is a recurring issue, and especially hits home with those of us (like Stephen and me) who are readers of Nietzsche's views on the subject. Nietzsche himself was not able to wrap his mind around the Epicurean solution to this problem, and felt the need to look to a Pythagorean/Stoic cycle of "eternal return" as his response to nihilism. Stephen's post well summarizes how despite Nietzsche's ultimate separation of himself from Epicurean views, Epicureanism IS a sufficient response to nihilistic despair - without the need to hypothesize a "Groundhog Day" type of eternal return for motivation. Excellent comments after the post too.

\*\*Stephen also posted to a youtube video on Epicureanism by someone named "FarWestMan." [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) Unfortunately from my personal point of view, the video focuses heavily on analysis by comparison to Buddhism, and by focus on an alleged "hedonic treadmill." Thus I can't recommend this as an introductory video, but the link was well worth posting as an example of how some people view the basics of the philosophy. In my view it should be a major priority of us who are real fans of Epicurus to produce new introductory videos, so this is definitely a link to review as we consider how to better structure introductory content.

\*\*Also to round out the week, Stephen's posts about setting up the new group are here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...6/?stream_ref=2) and here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* I hope to have more news next week about an updated edition of an epub I am working on to provide better access to the core works of Epicurus, but I will leave that for next week.

What I would like to add here as a personal note for those who read this is that I truly appreciate the friendship (even though it may be only "internet friendship") of those who participate regularly here. It is very easy to get caught up in our day-to-day living (as I am guilty of lately) and fail to find the time to pursue our philosophical interests. Speaking only for myself, I find this to be a prescription for disaster -- the only way I can keep my "day-to-day" life organized is to keep my MIND organized, and the best way I know to do that is to refer to the guidance Epicurus left us for cutting through all the smoke and mirrors that "the crowd" throws

our way in all walks of life.

Just before writing the update tonight I had a friend call me and unload a story of disaster after disaster in his own close family, from unemployment to medical problems (while lacking insurance of course) to clinical depression causing family members to become dependent on him -- on and on in what I used to think when growing up belonged only in afternoon soap operas. His call was a good reminder that virtually ALL of us -- and I dare say almost without exception - face our own personal struggles and turmoils that we feel helpless against. Some of those troubles indeed have no remedies - death and serious illness (bodily and mental) stalk us all. But if there ever lived a man whose vision better equips us to deal with our troubles than Epicurus, I am not aware of him. Epicurus shows us the remedies that we need ourselves, and that we need in order to assist our friends. The study of Epicurus is the necessary road on which to find those remedies.

And that brings LUCIAN to mind, so let's close with his words from Alexander the Oracle-Monger:

"

My object, dear friend, in making this small selection from a great mass of material has been twofold. First, I was willing to oblige a friend and comrade who is for me the pattern of wisdom, sincerity, good humor, justice, tranquillity, and geniality. But secondly I was still more concerned (a preference which you may be far from resenting) to strike a blow for Epicurus, that great man whose holiness and divinity of nature were not shams, who alone had and imparted true insight into the good, and who brought deliverance to all that consorted with him. Yet I think causal readers too may find my essay not unserviceable, since it is not only destructive, but for men of sense, constructive also."

\*\*\*\*Epicurus, that great man whose holiness and divinity of nature were not shams, who alone had and imparted true insight into the good, and who brought deliverance to all that consorted with him!!\*\*\*

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>, or in the NEW group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat Apr 19, 2014 10:33 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 4/19/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-first in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> I compile this each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of discussions about Epicurus, and I hope you'll find this to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\*For those of you who don't read this until the Twentieth - Happy Twentieth!

\*\*Things are coming along nicely in the new Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group ( <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> ) If you have not already done so, please go over now to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> and be sure that you are listed as a member of the new group. This is by no means intended to be an exclusive group, and it is open to anyone who has a sincere interest in learning about Epicureanism and discussing it with others. We've started the new group solely to be sure we have administrative control over it, so when the occasional "insincere" troll drops by, we'll be able to deal with it efficiently.

\*\* We had a number of discussions of important issues this week:

\*\* First for the week, Mark W. posted about his reading through Lucretius in the original Latin, and the discussion about how Lucretius seemed to foreshadow the modern scientific method morphed into a discussion of the role of science in everyday life. Here again we debated the issue of "science for the sake of science" vs "science for the sake of happiness" and to what extent theoretical science is particular is helpful to happy living. As most of our regulars know Tom M. has strong views on this subject, and the discussion turned pointed on whether in fact there is an undercurrent of hostility toward science in Epicureanism. We have a wide variety of opinion on this topic and this thread contains much useful information for those who are new to the debate. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream\\_ref=3](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream_ref=3) Be sure to catch in particular Tom's separate post here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*As we continued with the setting up of the new group there was discussion about the main "banner" graphic. It's one of my favorites from the ancient world, but another of my favorites is the one mentioned by several others - the leaping pig [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...0/?stream_ref=2) [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream_ref=2) which is almost certainly, having been found in the Villa of the Papyri, related to the reference Horace made to "hogs of Epicurus' herd."

\*\*Steve Kl. posted a link to an interview with Pharrell Williams on CBS Sunday Morning, where the conversation seemed to cover a number of Epicurean themes on happy living. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream_ref=2)

\*\*One post I regret I did not get to follow more closely, and in which further discussion would have been very interesting, was Agammenon K's post to an article comparing Epicurus and Aristotle. I am convinced that this is an area that is extremely important to study, as many -- if not all! -- of Epicurus' positions are best understood by first learning about the prior thoughts and positions of the philosophers who had come before. The divergence between Epicurus and Plato is most stark and important to follow, but there were also important differences between Epicurus and Aristotle. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...1/?stream_ref=2) This is a topic to which I hope to return again and again.

\*\*As the week continued, Hiram posted to the latest Cosmos episode on Atomism and Democritus. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) I am particularly embarrassed to say that I missed this, both the episode and the comments. But in my absence the regulars from both subschools showed up: Tom M. to mention that there was lots of "useless information" and B. to cite that "Material does not have a beginning! Unfortunately Mr. Tyson repeats what he has been taught by the modern authorities, who still follow the Jewish model of the universe—with a beginning and an end." B. also posted a graphic of Epicurus' ten most fundamental observations about the physical universe, and I particular want to point those out and emphasize their importance. I regularly get grief for making this point, but I will always contend that Epicureanism stands or falls on the ultimate validity of the view of the nature of the universe stated in these ten observations. Certainly Epicurus did not have our modern knowledge of the details, but all of these add up to a universe that functions on rational, reliable, NATURAL principles - rather than by the will of the gods or by absolute randomness and "luck." The [Principal Doctrines](#) have their place as the summary of how to live, but if the fundamentals of this list are not accurate, the Doctrines are WORSE than worthless. If gods do run the universe and painstakingly decides who goes to heaven and who goes to hell for eternity, then the entire system of Epicureanism falls. We may think that Epicurus and Luretius both spent far too much time discussing atoms, but they didn't think so, and if you stop and think you'll understand why as well. Keep this link! <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...40588808&type=1>

\*\*In one of the most thought-provoking posts of the week, Stephen HB posted a question as to what we saw to be Epicurus' "greatest errors."

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2) WELL as I type this I see the hazards of cross-posting! I followed the discussion here [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...5/?stream_ref=2) but now I see that a parallel discussion that I missed entirely was going on here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...0/?stream_ref=2) Both threads had some interesting viewpoints but I'll take the liberty here of closing with some of my comments on the back and forth: "[I]t seems to me that in order to understand a philosophy we have to try to appreciate it from the point of view of the authors, and not just presume that since we are younger we are somehow wiser as a matter of course. Even in these recent comments here there is a suggestion that it would be smarter to adopt "indifference" toward the issue of the role of gods rather than the attitude that Epicurus suggested. That's certainly fine with me! This is just a discussion group after all! But no one should be confused that those ideas are Epicurean, and all I am doing is (1) pointing out when they NOT Epicurean, and (2) pointing out the Epicurean arguments why those positions are wrong. As for whether we should consider ourselves "Epicurean" or not, that's also obviously a matter of personal taste. I think based on what I'm reading here that we all should remember that this is a Facebook discussion forum, nothing more, nothing less. I haven't observed any trolling or improper behavior by anyone and I'm just happy we have a place to discuss these issues with people whose views are even mildly similar. When I or anyone else decides to set up a cult, I for one will make that very clear! In the meantime, this place is simply a place where people with similar interests can discuss things in a supportive environment, as I see it. Peace and Safety!"

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat May 03, 2014 10:03 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 4/26/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-second (A FULL YEAR!) in a series of weekly updates on news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> I compile this each week

as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of discussions about Epicurus, and I hope you will find this to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\* We continue to migrate to the new Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group ( <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> ) If you have not already done so, please go over now to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> and be sure that you are listed as a member of the new group so you'll be informed of new posts and be sure to get the latest news.

\*\* Last week included the twentieth, and we had a number of posts on that date that I did not get to cover last week.

\*\* Hiram posted a brief review of the "Epicurus the Sage" comic. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2) This is something I have been aware of for years, but never really investigated. Thanks for the reminder that this is out there.

\*\* Tom posted a link to an article entitled "US No Longer An Actual Democracy" [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...5/?stream_ref=2) which documents that the American political system has turned into an oligarchy. The implication of course is that it is harder and harder to have an effect other than locally (and of course it's not always easy to have an effect locally!)

\*\*A 4/21 rolled around, Kevin B asked if he could exhale: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...1/?stream_ref=2) Lots of likes, but no one pointed out that the wise man gets greater joy out of public celebrations than other men, and that the wise man feels emotion more deeply, but it is no hindrance to his wisdom!!

\*\*Also on 4/21 I posted a link to a question I had received about the oddly-named Epicurus Institute and Epicurus Group. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...7/?stream_ref=2) Oddly named, I should say, because the activities of these entities seem to have little to do with Epicurus. Tom M. had some good background about that.

\*\*On 4/22 Christos Tsigaridas asked why Christians and Epicureans had/have so much animosity between them when both are supposedly fond of love and friendship. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...7/?stream_ref=2) Elli answered the question in Greek, and Hiram suggested ". because they closed all our schools and burned all our books maybe?"

\*\* On 4/23 Tom posted a link to a story about a high school teacher who found happiness in a humble occupation. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...3/?stream_ref=2)

\*\* Then on 4/24 Tom posted to an article about pursuing environmental goals locally. [https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardeno...9/?stream_ref=2) I have to confess that I hijacked the discussion by pointing out that the background of the lead photo looked like a famous LA aqueduct, which Tom agreed was a scene from the Terminator 2 movie, and of course that was my invitation to site the "NO FATE" theme of that movie..... Fate and free will are always good

for a debate so if you need a refresher, check that thread.

\*\* Then last for the week (for now, anyway) I posted to an article entitled [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...8/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...8/?stream_ref=2) "How to Choose Happiness, The Neurochemical Basis." That's more up Tom's alley than mine, but an interesting article on living happily.

\*\* To close out the week, i should say that Stephen and I have had some preliminary discussions about setting up a "Live Like An Epicurean" week, along the model of what a rival and sadly misguided philosophy group has done: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Stoicism/585100288209745/> Hey, speaking of our friends in that group being mixed up, take a look at the graphic here: <http://www.rootsimple.com/2013/11/the-stoic-week-handbook/> Uh, sir, that bust is EPICURUS, not EPICTETUS, and there IS a difference!) Here is some further info on the way those guys did it: <http://philosophy-of-cbt.com/tag/stoic-week/> And for a copy of their "handbook" check here: <http://modernstoicism.com/mod/page/view.php?id=13> Look for some posts on this topic in the near future!

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Garden of Epicurus <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardenofepicurus/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat May 03, 2014 10:03 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 5/3/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-third in a series of weekly updates with news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> I compile this each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of new developments among fans or those who are discussing Epicurus in any public forum, and I hope you will find this to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\* Once again this week let me remind you that we continue to migrate to the new Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> If you have not already done so, flip over there now and be sure that you are listed as a member so you'll be informed of new posts. Once again this week I myself have failed to keep track of an active discussion because I "liked" a post in old group but not in the new one. Don't let that happen to you - be sure to like any crossposting so you'll be notified of comments.

\*\* The big news of this past week is that our friend Mequa has taken the bull by the horns (a nod to all you benighted fans of Mithras) and made great progress on an outline of text for use in an upcoming "Live Like An Epicurean" week. We are as shamelessly stealing this idea from the modern stoicism groups as Seneca shamelessly stole the sayings of Epicurus for his letters. So fear not that anything improper is going on, the Stoics owe more to Epicureanism than they could ever repay. It's important to remember that the gap between Stoicism and Epicureanism in terms of ideas about the gods and \*many\* basic philosophical points is so great that the two schools they have never been and can never be fully reconciled. But at the same time, over the ages both schools came to be remembered largely for their emphasis on psychological aspects such as self-control, self-reliance, and independence from the outside world, and here the techniques used by the two schools became difficult to distinguish. Lines blurred to the extent that it was sometimes difficult to know whether men such as Marcus Aurelius were speaking as Epicureans or Stoics. (Of course, when they spoke of Fate, of resignation, of apathy, of suppression of emotion, and of the gods as rulers of the universe - as they often did and as was core to their philosophy - there was no doubt that they were speaking the corruption of Stoicism.) But brushing aside any grey areas and grounding the useful techniques on the solid ground of the Epicurean view of life in the universe, "Live Like An Epicurean" week will highlight the ancient techniques and goals from an Epicurean perspective so that we can see how they remain valuable to us today.

\*\*Discussion and preparation of an outline for the week is going on in two places. Most of the general discussion is going on at the Facebook group here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...0/?stream_ref=2) As is explained in that post, the actual outline is being developed here: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_u...xLXkavjg-o/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_u...xLXkavjg-o/edit)

\*\*Not to give away all the detail, but here are the daily headings that are being developed:

Monday: Overcoming Superstitious Fears

Tuesday: Overcoming Fear of Death

Wednesday: What is Good is Easy to Attain

Thursday: What is Bad is Easy to Endure

Friday: Knowledge and the Canon of Truth

Saturday: Friendship and Community

Sunday: Living in the Moment

\*\*This is our first effort at this, and the outline will not be finished for some period of time. It is hoped that this will be an annual affair, but at this point we have no "official" timetable. In the meantime, it's always good advice to contemplate and practice each of these ideas as frequently as possible - just like Epicurus advised - so don't wait for the official week to work them into your own life.

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat May 10, 2014 8:38 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 5/10/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-fourth in a series of weekly updates with news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> I compile this each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of new developments among fans or those

who are discussing Epicurus in any public forum, and I hope you will find this to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\* We continue to migrate to the new Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> If you have not already done so, flip over there now and be sure that you are listed as a member so you'll be informed of new posts. Once again this week I myself have failed to keep track of an active discussion because I "liked" a post in old group but not in the new one. Don't let that happen to you - be sure to like any crossposting so you'll be notified of comments.

\*\*Before turning to new posts, let me highlight two news-worthy items this week:

\*\* FIRST: Mequa continues to make good progress on an outline for an upcoming "Live Like An Epicurean" week. Please check the latest progress here: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_u...xLXkavjg-o/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_u...xLXkavjg-o/edit) Please feel free to make comments or suggestions here in comments to this post, or in comments to the original post here: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...0/?stream\\_ref=2](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...0/?stream_ref=2)

Monday: Overcoming Superstitious Fears

Tuesday: Overcoming Fear of Death

Wednesday: What is Good is Easy to Attain

Thursday: What is Bad is Easy to Endure

Friday: Knowledge and the Canon of Truth

Saturday: Friendship and Community

Sunday: Living in the Moment

\*\*SECOND: I am very pleased to announce that we are nearing completion on the transcription of Gassendi's Life and Doctrines of Epicurus as preserved in English through the "History of Philosophy" prepared in England in 1660 by Thomas Stanley. This document can already be read in full in PDF form at this link: <https://archive.org/details/Stanle...curusByGassendi> Several of us in the facebook group have been working on transcribing this into a WORD document for easier reference. Work is not 100% complete, and proofreading continues, but we are making good progress thanks mostly to Ilkka V. I want to state my special appreciation to Ilkka who persevered in the work when I allowed myself to get distracted over the last several months. There is more work to be done and others deserve credit as well. We'll work toward posting this in an appropriate place - hopefully multiple appropriate places. In the meantime I have updated one of my pages with a portion the text here: <http://newepicurean.com/one-of-the-fir...ne-of-epicurus/>

\*\*Posts for this week were as if we had designated the whole week "Overcoming Fear of Death Week":

\*\*On May 8 Tom posted to an article entitled "Death Doulas: helping people face up to Dying" from the UK Guardian. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...61498023899161/>

\*\*Tom also posted to a Satanist Prayer and suggested that the same words could be spoken by an Epicurean. It's worth quoting here: "Let us stand now, unbowed and unfettered by arcane doctrines born of fearful minds in darkened times. Let us embrace the Luciferian [Epicurean] impulse to eat of the Tree of Knowledge and dissipate our blissful and comforting delusions of old. Let us demand that individuals be judged for their concrete actions, not their fealty to arbitrary social norms and illusory categorizations. Let us reason our solutions with agnosticism in all things, holding fast only to that which is demonstrably true. Let us stand firm against any and all arbitrary authority that threatens the personal sovereignty of One or All. That which will not bend must break, and that which can be destroyed by truth should never be spared its demise. It is Done."

\*\* Tom also posted an article on a debate about the proposition "Death is Not Final" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...61512747231022/>

\*\* Death ruled the topics til the end, when Steve Ko. posted a link to a visualization of the formation of the universe. That's always good for a discussion of cosmology, and so it was again: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...60804853968478/>

\*\* And to round out the week (so far) I posted an article on consolation on the death of a friend. <http://newepicurean.com/consolation-on...an-perspective/>

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat May 17, 2014 9:00 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 5/17/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-fifth in a series of weekly updates with news from the world of Epicureanism. These posts are collected at the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> I compile this each week as a personal exercise to help myself keep track of new developments among fans or those who are discussing Epicurus in any public forum, and I hope you will find this to be of some interest to you as well.

\*\* Please remember that we continue to migrate to the new Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> If you haven't already done so, click over there and be sure you are a member so you'll be informed of new posts.

\*\* First off I'd like to highlight that I have revised the page at <http://www.AFewDaysInAthens.com> to spruce up the introductory material, and to add a function allowing you to listen to the book in text-to-speech. The files are hosted at archive.org which provides an easy way to listen to them and also download them. All this is explained here: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...80399312&type=1> One of the blurbs I added was the extended comment of Thomas Jefferson about this book. In addition to calling it "A treat to me of the highest order." Jefferson wrote that "the matter and manner of the dialogue is strictly ancient ... the scenery and portraiture of the interlocutors are of higher finish than anything in that line left us by the ancients; and like Ossian, if not ancient, it is equal to the best morsels of antiquity."

\*\*Also this week, I posted links to several vintage editorial cartoons by Winsor McCay that had themes directly parallel to key Epicurean doctrines. They were on how all men die ( <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...43611599&type=1> ); time spinning the wheel of life, which is reminiscent of a classic mosaic from Pompeii ( <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...80277952&type=1> ); an illustration of Fear as being the great monster of life ( <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...23610881&type=1> ); and an illustration of Reason illuminating the path of life ( <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...60277364&type=1> )

\*\* And in regard to reason, we should all be familiar with Epicurean Doctrine 16: "Chance seldom interferes with the wise man; his greatest and highest interests have been, are, and will be, directed by reason throughout his whole life." That provides us an excellent lead-in to the most hotly-discussed topic of the week, that of "dogmatism." Mequa posted a link to an article entitled "What's So Wrong With Being Absolutely Right" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...64607523588211/> and he illustrated the significance of the topic with the example of modern physics. I'll let the debate the followed

speak for itself, both in the main thread and also in the related thread concerning Plato and his inscription over the Academy reading "Let no one ignorant of geometry enter here." <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...64827926899504/> Like I said, I won't try to recap the debate in this Weekly Update, but it's a very significant issue and all fans of Epicurus should be versed in BOTH sides of the argument, so that they can decide for themselves which side they believe to be correct.

\*\* I note also that Hiram Crespo has posted a link to the cover for his upcoming book entitled "Tending the Epicurean Garden" <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid...56985266&type=1> I understand it will be the fall before it will be released, but I can't say enough good things about the energy Hiram has shown in his work in promoting the philosophy of Epicurus. He's translating his book into Spanish as well, and though for all I know there are many books in Spanish about Epicurus (I doubt it), I'm sure this is going to be one of the more important and best. Let me also note something else: Few of us (presumably none) have the good fortune to be born into families that educate us at home about our Greco-Roman heritage in general or Epicurus in particular, so we generally come to Epicurus through some related interest. In Hiram's case I understand his interest was in "autarchy," which I understand to be focused on the benefits of self-reliance. Of course self-reliance is also a technique that Epicurus strongly endorsed, but for reasons entirely separate from the reasons Stoics also liked the idea. When you hitch the technique of self-reliance to an Epicurean analysis of the purpose of life as being happy living (or the "pursuit of pleasure"), you have a powerful combination that comes very close to the heart (as I understand it) of the core insight of Epicurus. With Hiram's focus in this direction, I think his views are far less likely to stray from Epicurean analysis than if he came from some other (e.g. Stoic) background, so I am very much looking forward to his thoughts in the book.

\*\*Rounding out the week, Tom posted a link to the article "The Case for Soft Atheism" as providing an echo of some of the thoughts of <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...65367103512253/> Alain de Botton..

\*\*As we close this Update, this is a good time to remind readers of this Update, and of the Epicurean Facebook pages, that the ancient Epicureans were renowned for their good humor and compassionate/friendly style of interacting with each other. Yes, Epicurus could throw around witticisms as to describe people as "jellyfish" and "illiterate" and "golden" and the like, but as Diogenes Laertius tells us, the people who accused Epicurus of being mean and unfriendly were "stark mad.... for our philosopher has numerous witnesses to attest his unsurpassed goodwill to all men." To me, the best way to defuse the ill will that I regularly feel toward certain people is to step back and think about, as Epicurus also suggested, infinity, eternity, and death. When I think about how short life is, and how sad it is to waste any moments of it, I find it much easier to step back and allow others to have their own opinions, even when those opinions differ greatly from mine.

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

PS: Darn this has been a long week for me. I forgot to mention both Hiram's new post (Pythagoras and the Swerve <http://www.facebook.com/l.php...> ) and the new post from the Menoeceus blog (<http://menoeceus.blogspot.com/.../vain-desire-leads-to...>). I will include them next week!

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat May 24, 2014 8:54 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 5/24/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-sixth in a series of weekly updates with news from the world of Epicureanism. Now that we've been going with this for over a year, it's time for a few changes that I'll briefly explain. Over the last year, these updates have been something of a collaboration between myself and Mequa, who has been the host of the Epicurean Philosophy Today forum at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> . Mequa has decided to move on in his philosophic interests and away from our particular Facebook groups. I'm very sorry to see him go, and I hope you will all join me in wishing him well in pursuing his future interests. We'll miss him and hope for his return one day.

\*\* My purpose in compiling this each week has been to serve as a way to help myself keep track of new developments among those who are interested in Epicurus, and to make it easier for those of us who share these interest to communicate. As far as the use of private forums for this purpose, there's no question that this is the age of Facebook, and the older format of web-based bulletin boards just can't keep up. I will therefore only update the Englishboards forum occasionally as time permits. I will therefore work on upgrading the site currently located at

EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com and archive these posts there. I set up that page as a "clearinghouse" for links on the world of Epicurus, and these updates should fit well as regular blog posts at that site.

\*\* One of the many good services that Mequa did for us before he departed was to set up the new Epicurean Philosophy Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> If you haven't already done so, click over there and be sure you are a member so you'll be informed of new posts.

\*\* To start the week on May 18th, I posted a link to the web page of German physician Dr. Michael Sanger <http://michaelsagner.com/> Dr. Sanger is president of the European Society of Lifestyle Medicine, located here: <http://eu-lifestylemedicine.org/> He has a personal interest in Epicurus and was thoughtful enough to say a kind word to me about the NewEpicurean.com website. I was able to put him in touch with Dr. Christos Yapijakis, a geneticist in Athens, who is a real dynamo for Epicurus in Greece and is the leader of the Athens Epicurus interest group. Dr. Yapijakis, for those who are interested, is at: <http://yapijakisen.wordpress.com/bio/> It's a great privilege to be able to assist people who share an interest in Epicurus to get in touch with each other. If you're a lurker in the Facebook forums but have a special interest you'd like to discuss, be sure to post on the Facebook groups or email me privately at [Cassius@NewEpicurean.com](mailto:Cassius@NewEpicurean.com)

\*\*Also on May 18 Hiram posted a link to the second Epicurean gathering held by a group in England: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...66434563405507/> Here's a direct link to the post that has pictures and detailed summary of their event: <http://andrewjbrown.blogspot.com/2014/05/a-seco...and-little.html>

\*\*This past week included the Twentieth of May, and I posted about that here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...67322239983406/> Please also remember that Hiram has a Happy Twentieth newsletter that goes out by email every month. You can view a sample issue here <http://us3.campaign-archive2.com/?u=c2e20fc0ffb...c5&e=73c7715309> I really urge you to check that out, follow the various links that Hiram posts, and be sure you are on the mailing list!

\*\*Now for a link I almost hesitate to post! 😊 Hiram posted today a youtube video by a struggling youth who gave a sermon on "Epicureanism or Hedonism" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...69221053126858/> Wow it's hard to believe one person can be so confused! Some of what he said was true, but he's so misunderstood the overall context that any listeners who don't know better will end up more confused than when they started. We had some discussion about this post at the link, but the part I'd like to repeat here is that in my view it's hard to blame someone like him, who clearly has no real understanding of Epicureanism, and who seems to be relying on a few clips from a source such as Wikipedia or worse. The video producer equates Epicureanism with Hedonism as if they were the same (very wrong) and talks as if the essence of Epicureanism is relativism, which could hardly be further from the truth. It's too much to hope that the superficial study this guy did

would have been enough to educate him about the "limits and boundaries" and the very firm, very natural-law based universe of Epicurus. Very few of the readily-available sources even mention the physics that establishes these limits and boundaries, and without an understanding of how Epicurus viewed the universe, interpreting his Ethics correctly is a hopeless task. Watch the video if you want a few laughs, but NOT for education! 😊

\*\* I don't always pick up the links from new posts at the Menoeceus blog, but here's one I'd like to be sure not to miss: <http://menoeceus.blogspot.com/2014/05/scienc...-happiness.html> If you haven't been following Ilkka's blog this is a good opportunity to flip back through the posts, which are uniformly pithy and intelligent. This week's was on "Science is Vital to Happiness" and it's a short and sweet argument for an essential point.

\*\*That's it for the week! As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

Join date: 2013-06-03

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus on Sat May 31, 2014 9:12 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 5/31/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-seventh in a series of weekly updates with news from the world of Epicureanism. Copies of these posts are stored at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> and EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com . Our home base for discussion of Epicurean philosophy is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> Please consider joining us there so your facebook feed will be updated with the most recent postings.

\*\* Let me start out the week by encouraging you to follow along and participate in the Facebook page discussions. Most of us who have "liked" one of the various Epicurus pages would profit from increasing our knowledge about the history of Epicureanism and how it applies today. I know that I still feel like I have only glimpsed the tip of the iceberg of what is out there. One of the best ways I have found to learn more has been to see the comments that others make in their own studies. In fact that is largely what my own blog (<http://www.NewEpicurean.com>) is all about. Since 2010 I have been recording my observations about Epicureanism as I have come across new resources. In doing so I think I have much improved my own understanding of the philosophical issues. I hope the posts have been of benefit to others as well, but it is very much as Epicurus said - that the study of philosophy is one activity where the pleasure comes along with the doing, rather than long afterwards.

\*\*On a personal note, lately I have gone through a period where the pressures of day-to-day work life have prevented me from studying as much as I would have liked. Rather than lead me away, however, these pressures have shown me how essential it is to keep in touch with the core principles. It's been of great benefit for me to continue to do these weekly updates, and to check into Facebook and see that others are also working to apply Epicureanism to their own lives. And here I will repeat an analogy that has stuck with me over the years: By no means would I ever assert that Epicurus was uniquely talented, or deserving of blind faith in his teachings, or the guru of the ages. Many fine thinkers have existed before and after Epicurus, and the circumstances of our individual lives are very important in determining which of those are most relevant to us. But I think often of the analogy of being a fan of a sports team. All of us have our favorite sports teams (or similar interests) where we identify with a common, limited, and well-defined group of people. Obviously I believe Epicureanism to be much more important than any sports team. I believe the truth today is that many people are rightly alienated from the cultural institutions that gave them some sense of community in the past. Wherever one looks, to big religion, to big media, to government, to the academy, to health care -- in whatever direction you care to look -- all our institutions are failing us at an increasing rate. Epicureanism is certainly not able to fill in the gap where these have failed, but for me at least it is comforting and helpful to know that in the great wasteland that civilization often seems to be, we can grasp a remnant of a worthwhile movement that once existed in reality and could exist again. Epicureanism was not just a figment of someone's imagination, not just a book of fairy tales, but a very real phenomena composed of very real people who prospered in the real world despite the oppression of both religion and politicians. At least for me, identifying with the very real heroes of the ancient Epicurean school provides a point of mental reference that is far more important to me than the fate of a local soccer team. I am not so bold as to predict the possibility that a new Epicurean age will arise again, but what I do know is that while I am alive I need a point of reference - a steady example that inspires me with knowledge that happy living is possible. I know that I know no better example to follow than that set by Epicurus, Metrodorus, Lucretius, and so many others, and I am happy to share that interest with anyone of good will.

\*\*From the forum this week:

\*\*Hiram started the week by posting a link to a Youtube rant by a young man who flailed away at attempting to explain Epicureanism as hedonism. The title of his talk was "Relativism Refuted - Epicureanism of Hedonism." The producer of the video seems to come from a Christian perspective, and I gather the real target of his talk was to condemn Epicureanism as an extreme Relativistic philosophy. It was far too much to hope that he would find references to explain how this is very far from the mark, and the result was that his talk combined some truth with much misunderstanding. We had a good discussion about it here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...69221053126858/>

\*\*Tom M. posted several links this week of statements which had at least a neo-Epicurean slant. The first one was an article entitled "To be happy in old age give up your ambition" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...69899699725660/> The subtitle was "The former older people's tsar says the elderly must 'give up winning' to be satisfied" It's important to drill down to be sure exactly what she is saying, as one of her initial quotes is "Everybody can have a sense of purpose until they die. You do lose, but you gain many things." Maintaining a sense of purpose is surely important for \*everyone\*. Epicurus observed in the letter to Menoecus that "[n]o age is too early or too late for the health of the soul. And to say that the season for studying philosophy has not yet come, or that it is past and gone, is like saying that the season for happiness is not yet or that it is now no more. Therefore, both old and young alike ought to seek wisdom, the former in order that, as age comes over him, he may be young in good things because of the grace of what has been, and the latter in order that, while he is young, he may at the same time be old, because he has no fear of the things which are to come."

\*\*Hiram posted a link to a Youtube video on one of our most regular topics of discussion: "Determinism" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...70069906375306/> This video was entitled "Experimental Philosophy: Free Will" and it served as a good set-up for asking the right questions - without proposing any answers ;-).

\*The last post of the week by Tom M. touches on the topic with which I started out this update. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...72250376157259/> The article title was "Cohesion, PTSD, and War" <http://www.jonahlehrer.com/blog/2014/5/21/cohesion-and-war> Just as Tom observed, " Close relationships, in this sense, are the ultimate coping mechanism, allowing us to survive the worst parts of life." This is in my view so very true, and one of the benefits of associating with others who share our views and become our friends. This is a thread that is so core to Epicureanism that it hardly needs repeating, but to cite just one reference: "[PD28](#). The same conviction which inspires confidence that nothing we have to fear is eternal or even of long duration, also enables us to see that in the limited evils of this life nothing enhances our security so much as friendship." And here I am sure he means not just physical security, but also mental security.

\*\*That's it for the week! I apologize if I missed anyone or anything. As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean

Philosophy Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

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Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

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Re: \*\*\* This Week In Epicureanism \*\*\*

Post by CassiusAmicus Yesterday at 10:02 pm

\*\*\*THIS WEEK IN EPICUREANISM - 6/7/2014\*\*\*

\*\*This is the fifty-eighth in a series of weekly updates with news from the world of Epicureanism. Our home base for discussion of Epicurean philosophy is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/> and copies of these posts are stored at <http://www.epicurus.englishboards.com/t19-this-week-in-epicureanism> and [EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com](http://EpicurusCentral.wordpress.com). Please consider joining us on the Facebook forum so your facebook feed will be updated with the most recent postings.

\*\* This has been a particularly good week on the forum, and I think we've ended the week on a high note with new participants and ideas for making things better. Let me recap where I think we are in the "online world of Epicureanism":

\*\* First let me say where I think we're NOT. We're \*not\* working on building a cult; we're \*not\* trying to be creepy and obsessive about ancient history; we're \*not\* trying to take the place of a professional academic study group where we show off our knowledge of trivia; we're \*not\* looking to provide a home for everyone in the world who knows how to spell the word "philosophy." As I see it we are ordinary people of good will who understand that happy living requires a framework of thinking. Although we've each started from any number of different perspectives, we've independently come to think that Epicurus had some particularly insightful things to say, and we'd like to learn more about his views as they might help us in living our own lives.

\*\*There are a number of conversation lists in which one can discuss Epicurus on the internet. One that immediately comes to mind is here: <http://www.epicurus.net/en/epl.html> I don't participate in that one as much as I would like, but it is available and contains some very good people. It is, however, built on the old model of a "list-serve," so it is based on traditional email.

\*\*Facebook is something of a brave new world. It provides amazing opportunities, along with a number of hazards and dangers. As we are a philosophy known to be identified with the phrase "live unknown," we certainly want to be careful in how we go about spreading our names and faces across the world at large. I like to point out, however, that we don't have the context for "live unknown" to evaluate its limitations, and it's obvious that even Epicurus himself did not let the desire for privacy get in the way of conducting an outreach campaign to friends across the world.

\*\* Our current "Epicurean Philosophy" facebook group is "open" - which means that anyone can see what we post. I need not remind most of you that there are controversial aspects to Epicureanism, so I suggest that people be circumspect in what they post and how they identify themselves in an open group like this. Perhaps in the future we can add a "closed/private" group as an adjunct to this one, but for now we need to keep in mind that there are few if any filters on who can choose to read what we write.

\*\*I think we have a consensus that our present group is, and will always be, a place for light and happy discussion; a place to come into contact with others from across the world who share our similar interests; and not a place for bitterness or strife or unpleasantness of any kind. We have two good moderators here (three if you want to count me) and they've established a track record of good judgment and interest in our topic that we can count on to keep the group on an even keel.

\*\*As we ended the week we had a new visitor from Italy, a location I've personally been keen to try to make contact with, given its role in ancient Epicureanism. From there the topic has arisen that perhaps we should introduce ourselves on the forum. Once the weekly update is out I will do that for myself and hopefully provide a template for how others can do the same in a way that will provoke conversation without jeopardizing privacy.

\*\*As I wrote earlier today, I did a quick-and-dirty tally of the locations of our group members. There are some I can't pinpoint, but for the ones I can, the list looks something like this: USA 22 Greece 9 Australia 4 Netherlands 3 Poland 2 Germany 2 and 1 each from Italy, Lithuania, Croatia, Finland, Puerto Rico, Nigeria, Canada, South Africa, Czech Republic, and Russia. That means we have more from \*outside\* the USA than inside, which really makes for an interesting mix. I know that clicking "join" in Facebook guarantees very little about one's interest, agreement, or commitment to the topic of a group. But regardless of your level of interest, I encourage you to post on just about any topic that interests you, even if it just to say hello for the first time. We have few if any guidelines, other than that the post have some \*minimal\* connection to our common interest in Epicurean ideas. \*\*If you are smart enough to have an interest in Epicurus, you're sharp enough to know where the line is on what people here would

be interested to read.\*\* We're NOT just interested in the ancient texts, although those obviously play a large role in defining what it means to be a fan of Epicurus. Lots of our posts end up being links to articles written by outsiders from non-epicurean perspectives, or that butcher the real meaning of Epicureanism. Those are great for sharing information, but many of us would be \*at least\* as interested in any personal thoughts you have that in any way relate to why you clicked here in the first place. Many of us don't end up personally "friending" each other for privacy reasons, and that means all we learn about each other is what we see here. I am sure I am not the only one fascinated about why every one of us, from so many widely various locations and walks of life, has an interest in Epicurus. It's really great fun, not to mention inspiring, to hear the thoughts of those with similar interests.

\*\*OK that's the end of my speech for now. We can go lots of different directions in the future, from closed forums to private non-facebook forums, etc. There's no hierarchy here and no ideas are bad ones; just have a good time and be sure to post any suggestions you have.

\*\*From the forum this week:

\*\*Tom Merle posted a series of links to "Epicurean Sentiments" from the modern world as food for thought. They included <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...73817306000566/>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...73831729332457/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...73824142666549/>. Most of them combined some ideas that struck me as consistent with Epicureanism along with other ideas that I would think Epicurus would reject. For a colorful example: "Never, never marry, my friend. Here's my advice to you: don't marry until you can tell yourself that you've done all you could, and until you've stopped loving the woman you've chosen, until you see her clearly, otherwise you'll be cruelly and irremediably mistaken. Marry when you're old and good for nothing...Otherwise all that's good and lofty in you will be lost." The part about not marrying until you see the other party clearly seems \*highly\* Epicurean. Some of the rest, however, maybe not so much!

\*\*Also this week I posted a link to a new facebook forum, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ElementalEpicureanism/> which I have set up purely to post announcements and updates to the ebook I am currently working on to combine into a single resource as many of the core Epicurean texts (in public domain version) as possible. The ebook is in very usable form now, but it's not nearly as polished as I would like. On the other hand, this is turning out to be a much longer task than I expected, so if I wait until it is perfect it will never be available. I have therefore posted it in the new group, and as I make changes I will post announcements there, rather than cluttering up the main facebook page. I am preparing this because I want both (1) a single collection of the texts I can have at hand at all times, and (2) an outline with hyperlinks where the central concepts can be found throughout the texts. I hope you'll find the result somewhat helpful in your reading, as I am finding it in mind. The download is of course free.

\*\* In what is proving to be a contentious topic (physics!), I posted a link to an article by Roger Penrose, emeritus professor at the Mathematical Institute at the University of Oxford

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...74472272601736/> The article is entitled "Roger Penrose Says Physics Is Wrong, From String Theory to Quantum Mechanics." I don't think I need to rehash why this topic is of interest, and why it is controversial. Few minds are going to be changed; but gaining more information about both sides of the argument can only be a good thing. What passes as "science" today can be as divisive as religion, and it pays to keep an open mind at all times as to both!

\*\*Then on June 4 we had an excellent post by Brian Z. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...74856929229937/> He wrote: Interesting piece in today's BBC online that lends itself to corroboration of Vatican Sayings 17: "The young is not blessed, but the old having lived well; for the young at the height of power is bewildered by raving chance. But the old has anchored in old age as in a harbor and holds in secure and happy memories unexpected goods." <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/2...is-good-for-you> That led to some excellent discussion. This post was a good example of what I think the forum does best - allow us to discuss a clear, helpful, relevant issue that has lots of support in the Epicurean texts without crossing too far into side issues that lend to confusion with other philosophies.

\*\*On June 5, I posted about Hadrian's wall and Plotina <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...75452925837004/> That led to some discussion from members who were not previously familiar with Plotina and her Epicurean connections. Again, I think, a good result which achieved sharing interesting information that will be helpful in future discussions.

\*\*On June 6, I posted two cites I have recently come across related to a "moral sense," one in Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens," that she placed in the mouth of Epicurus, and one from a letter by Thomas Jefferson. I continue to find this to be an important topic, as explained here. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...75819835800313/>

\*\*Then, earlier today we had a new participant enter the forum, this time Elisa from Italy. I want to thank her for already contributing a post, this one a comparison of the hymn to Venus by Lucretius with a composition by Giacomo Leopardi, an eighteen century Italian poet. Of course I admit I had never heard of Leopardi, but there is a very interesting bio of him at Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giacomo\\_Leopardi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giacomo_Leopardi) Ah, here is something I would love to read "Pompeo in Egitto ("Pompey in Egypt", 1812), written at the age of fourteen, is an anti-Caesarean manifesto." Leopardi appears to have been a *very* interesting character; perhaps Elisa will tell us more about his hymn to Venus and his comments on Epicureanism!

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people. It is, however, built on the old model of a "list-serve," so it is based on traditional email.

\*\*Facebook is something of a brave new world. It provides amazing opportunities, along with a number of hazards and dangers. As we are a philosophy known to be identified with the phrase "live unknown," we certainly want to be careful in how we go about spreading our names and faces across the world at large. I like to point out, however, that we don't have the context for "live unknown" to evaluate its limitations, and it's obvious that even Epicurus himself did not let the desire for privacy get in the way of conducting an outreach campaign to friends across the world.

\*\* Our current "Epicurean Philosophy" facebook group is "open" - which means that anyone can see what we post. I need not remind most of you that there are controversial aspects to Epicureanism, so I suggest that people be circumspect in what they post and how they identify themselves in an open group like this. Perhaps in the future we can add a "closed/private" group as an adjunct to this one, but for now we need to keep in mind that there are few if any filters on who can choose to read what we write.

\*\*I think we have a consensus that our present group is, and will always be, a place for light and happy discussion; a place to come into contact with others from across the world who share our similar interests; and not a place for bitterness or strife or unpleasantness of any kind. We have two good moderators here (three if you want to count me) and they've established a track record of good judgment and interest in our topic that we can count on to keep the group on an even keel.

\*\*As we ended the week we had a new visitor from Italy, a location I've personally been keen to try to make contact with, given its role in ancient Epicureanism. From there the topic has arisen that perhaps we should introduce ourselves on the forum. Once the weekly update is out I will do that for myself and hopefully provide a template for how others can do the same in a way that will provoke conversation without jeopardizing privacy.

\*\*As I wrote earlier today, I did a quick-and-dirty tally of the locations of our group members. There are some I can't pinpoint, but for the ones I can, the list looks something like this: USA 22 Greece 9 Australia 4 Netherlands 3 Poland 2 Germany 2 and 1 each from Italy, Lithuania, Croatia, Finland, Puerto Rico, Nigeria, Canada, South Africa, Czech Republic, and Russia. That means we have more from \*outside\* the USA than inside, which really makes for an interesting mix. I know that clicking "join" in Facebook guarantees very little about one's interest, agreement, or commitment to the topic of a group. But regardless of your level of interest, I encourage you to post on just about any topic that interests you, even if it just to say hello for the first time. We have few if any guidelines, other than that the post have some \*minimal\* connection to our common interest in Epicurean ideas. \*\*If you are smart enough to have an interest in Epicurus, you're sharp enough to know where the line is on what people here would be interested to read.\*\* We're NOT just interested in the ancient texts, although those obviously play a large role in defining what it means to be a fan of Epicurus. Lots of our posts end up being links to articles written by outsiders from non-epicurean perspectives, or that

butcher the real meaning of Epicureanism. Those are great for sharing information, but many of us would be \*at least\* as interested in any personal thoughts you have that in any way relate to why you clicked here in the first place. Many of us don't end up personally "friending" each other for privacy reasons, and that means all we learn about each other is what we see here. I am sure I am not the only one fascinated about why every one of us, from so many widely various locations and walks of life, has an interest in Epicurus. It's really great fun, not to mention inspiring, to hear the thoughts of those with similar interests.

\*\*OK that's the end of my speech for now. We can go lots of different directions in the future, from closed forums to private non-facebook forums, etc. There's no hierarchy here and no ideas are bad ones; just have a good time and be sure to post any suggestions you have.

\*\*From the forum this week:

\*\*Tom Merle posted a series of links to "Epicurean Sentiments" from the modern world as food for thought. They included <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...73817306000566/>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...73831729332457/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...73824142666549/>. Most of them combined some ideas that struck me as consistent with Epicureanism along with other ideas that I would think Epicurus would reject. For a colorful example: "Never, never marry, my friend. Here's my advice to you: don't marry until you can tell yourself that you've done all you could, and until you've stopped loving the woman you've chosen, until you see her clearly, otherwise you'll be cruelly and irremediably mistaken. Marry when you're old and good for nothing...Otherwise all that's good and lofty in you will be lost." The part about not marrying until you see the other party clearly seems \*highly\* Epicurean. Some of the rest, however, maybe not so much!

\*\*Also this week I posted a link to a new facebook forum, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ElementalEpicureanism/> which I have set up purely to post announcements and updates to the ebook I am currently working on to combine into a single resource as many of the core Epicurean texts (in public domain version) as possible. The ebook is in very usable form now, but it's not nearly as polished as I would like. On the other hand, this is turning out to be a much longer task than I expected, so if I wait until it is perfect it will never be available. I have therefore posted it in the new group, and as I make changes I will post announcements there, rather than cluttering up the main facebook page. I am preparing this because I want both (1) a single collection of the texts I can have at hand at all times, and (2) an outline with hyperlinks where the central concepts can be found throughout the texts. I hope you'll find the result somewhat helpful in your reading, as I am finding it in mind. The download is of course free.

\*\* In what is proving to be a contentious topic (physics!), I posted a link to an article by Roger Penrose, emeritus professor at the Mathematical Institute at the University of Oxford <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...74472272601736/> The article is entitled "Roger Penrose Says Physics Is Wrong, From String Theory to Quantum Mechanics." I don't think I need to rehash why this topic is of interest, and why it is controversial. Few minds are going to be

changed; but gaining more information about both sides of the argument can only be a good thing. What passes as "science" today can be as divisive as religion, and it pays to keep an open mind at all times as to both!

\*\*Then on June 4 we had an excellent post by Brian Z. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...74856929229937/> He wrote: Interesting piece in today's BBC online that lends itself to corroboration of Vatican Sayings 17: "The young is not blessed, but the old having lived well; for the young at the height of power is bewildered by raving chance. But the old has anchored in old age as in a harbor and holds in secure and happy memories unexpected goods." <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/2...is-good-for-you> That led to some excellent discussion. This post was a good example of what I think the forum does best - allow us to discuss a clear, helpful, relevant issue that has lots of support in the Epicurean texts without crossing too far into side issues that lend to confusion with other philosophies.

\*\*On June 5, I posted about Hadrian's wall and Plotina <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...75452925837004/> That led to some discussion from members who were not previously familiar with Plotina and her Epicurean connections. Again, I think, a good result which achieved sharing interesting information that will be helpful in future discussions.

\*\*On June 6, I posted two cites I have recently come across related to a "moral sense," on in Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens," that she placed in the mouth of Epicurus, and one from a letter by Thomas Jefferson. I continue to find this to be an important topic, as explained here. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Epicure...75819835800313/>

\*\*Then, earlier today we had a new participant enter the forum, this time Elisa from Italy. I want to thank her for already contributing a post, this one a comparison of the hymn to Venus by Lucretius with a composition by Giacomo Leopardi, an eighteen century Italian poet. Of course I admit I had never heard of Leopardi, but there is a very interesting bio of him at Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giacomo\\_Leopardi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giacomo_Leopardi) Ah, here is something I would love to read "Pompeo in Egitto ("Pompey in Egypt", 1812), written at the age of fourteen, is an anti-Caesarean manifesto." Leopardi appears to have been a *very* interesting character; perhaps Elisa will tell us more about his hymn to venus and his comments on Epicureanism!

\*\*That's it for the week! I apologize if I missed anyone or anything. As always, if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, please add a comment or participate in the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EpicureanPhilosophy/>

PEACE AND SAFETY!

Cassius Amicus

CassiusAmicus

Posts: 63

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